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Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER & MELVIN J. LASKY

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edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

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THE PUKEY (a story)	3	*Nigel Dennis*
LONE VOICES	6	*Kingsley Amis*
RUSSIAN POPULISM	13	*Isaiah Berlin*
GENERAL DE GAULLE	29	*Herbert Luethy*
PALESTINE REGAINED	37	*R. H. S. Crossman*
FILM		
THE HABIT OF CENSORSHIP	52	*Derek Hill*
THEATRE		
OPTICAL DELUSIONS	63	*Nigel Dennis*
POETRY		
POEMS	12	*R. Pack Browning*
THE OLD BLOWING-HOUSE	28	*Ronald Bottrall*
FOR A CHILD, ON HIS BEING PRONOUNCED MENTALLY DEFECTIVE	50	*Jon Silkin*
NOTES AND TOPICS		
IDEOGRAPH'S DELIGHT	67	*Edward Seidensticker*
"THE FUTURE OF THE LEFT"	69	*Michael Foot*
	71	*Patrick Gordon Walker*
BOOKS		
BECKETT, SNOW AND PURE POVERTY	73	*Frank Kermode*
WHEN THE ARMY DEBUNKS THE ARMY	77	*William Peters*
JAMES JOYCE	79	*V. S. Pritchett*
WITH THE PUBLISHER'S COMPLIMENTS	82	*T. R. Fyvel*
BRITAIN *v.* EUROPE	84	*Alan Day*
SAGES AND HUCKSTERS	86	*Bernard Williams*
FROM THE OTHER SHORE	89	
LETTERS	92	

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Encounter

INDEX TO VOLUME XV

(July–December 1960)

Author	*Title*	*Month*	*Page*
Amis, Kingsley	Lone Voices	July	6
Arnold, G. L.	Outside the Whale (*Book Review*)	Aug.	76
	The Messianic Heresy (*Book Review*)	Nov.	76
Barzini, Luigi	Curzio Malaparte	Aug.	64
Beier, Ulli	Transition without Tears	Oct.	65
Bell, Daniel	"Vulgar Sociology"	Dec.	54
Berlin, Isaiah	Russian Populism	July	13
Bernard, Oliver	Being Alone (*poem*)	Nov.	54
Blake, Patricia	The Two Deaths of Vladimir Mayakovsky	Aug.	52
Bolt, Robert	More and the Dead Men	Nov.	61
Bonham Carter, Mark	Future of the Liberal-Left	Aug.	69
Bottrall, Ronald	The Old Blowing-House (*poem*)	July	28
Carson, Anthony	Off to Sicily	Sept.	15
	How I Drifted to Soho	Nov.	31
Chiaromonte, Nicola	Sweet Life and Uneasy Slumber	Sept.	57
Crosland, C. A. R.	On the Left Again	Oct.	3
Crossman, R. H. S.	Palestine Regained	July	37
Cunliffe, Marcus	A Lost American Masterpiece? (*Book Review*)	Oct.	71
Day, Alan	Britain v. Europe (*Book Review*)	July	84
Dennis, Nigel	The Pukey (*story*)	July	3
	Optical Delusions	July	63
	Music and Meaning	Aug.	49
	Theme and Challenge	Sept.	54
	Down among the Dead Men	Oct.	59
	The Vigorous Fancy	Nov.	51
	A Bicycle Built for Two (*story*)	Dec.	12
Fainlight, Harry	Lunik (*poem*)	Nov.	37
Fairlie, Henry	Labour, Loyalty, and the Left	Dec.	59
FitzGibbon, Constantine	The Lawrence Legend	Nov.	55
Foot, Michael	"The Future of the Left"	July	69
Forge, Andrew	Gentlemen Impressionists	Dec.	38
Fyvel, T. R.	With the Publisher's Compliments (*Book Review*)	July	82
Golding, William	Miss Pulkinhorn (*story*)	Aug.	27
Gordon Walker, P. C.	"The Future of the Left"	July	71
Gould, Julius	Intellectual Communists (*Book Review*)	Oct.	80
Hall, Donald	U.S. Poetry in England (*Book Review*)	Sept.	83
Hamburger, Michael	No Hatred and No Flag (*Book Review*)	Oct.	53
	Edwin Muir (*Book Review*)	Dec.	46
Hartley, Anthony	Three Novels (*Book Review*)	Sept.	80
	The Way We Live Now (*Book Review*)	Dec.	80
Heppenstall, Rayner	Divided We Stand	Sept.	42
Hill, Derek	The Habit of Censorship	July	52

PRODUCED 2003 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Author	Title	Month	Page
Himmelfarb, Gertrude	Men and Ideas: John Buchan	Sept.	46
Holles, Robert	Death of a Magazine	Aug.	42
Humphreys, Christmas	No Stink of Zen	Dec.	57
Hyun, Peter	Zen Arson (*Book Review*)	Sept.	82
Inglis, Brian	The Psychopath	Sept.	3
Joll, James	The End of Militarism (*Book Review*)	Oct.	82
Kermode, Frank	Beckett, Snow and Pure Poverty (*Book Review*)	July	73
	Old Orders Changing (*Book Review*)	Aug.	72
	The Interpretation of the Times (*Book Review*)	Sept.	71
	Mr. Waugh's Cities (*Book Review*)	Nov.	63
	A Short View of Musil (*Book Review*)	Dec.	64
Koestler, Arthur	Yoga Unexpurgated	Aug.	7
	A Stink of Zen	Oct.	13
Kristol, Irving	High, Low and Modern	Aug.	33
	Letter from New York: An Odd Lot	Dec.	62
Lowenthal, Richard	The Points of the Compass	Sept.	22
Luethy, Herbert	General de Gaulle	July	29
MacInnes, Colin	Welcome, Beauty Walk	Oct.	38
Mar, N.	"In the Land of Shakespeare and Burns"	July	89
Meyerhoff, Hans	Melodramatic Affair (*Book Review*)	Oct.	74
Nye, Robert	The Cherry Tree (*poem*)	Oct.	58
Osborne, John	On Film Censorship	Sept.	64
Pack Browning, R.	Reply to a Question (*poem*)	July	12
	Vocation (*poem*)	July	12
	Pigeons (*poem*)	July	12
	Gulls (*poem*)	July	12
Pasternak, B.	Three Letters	Aug.	3
Peters, William	When the Army Debunks the Army (*Book Review*)	July	77
Pritchett, V. S.	James Joyce (*Book Review*)	July	79
Peterkiewicz, Jerzy and Burns Singer	Poems from the Polish	Nov.	43
Raven, Simon	Boys will be Boys	Nov.	19
Redgrove, Peter	Out of Reach (*poem*)	Sept.	21
Rees, Goronwy	The Green	Sept.	29
Richards, J. M.	Piccadilly and After	Oct.	62
Richardson, Tony	On Film Censorship	Sept.	65
Riesman, David	The Uncommitted Generation	Nov.	25
Sansom, William	A Mixed Bag (*story*)	Oct.	33
Scannell, Vernon	Elegy (*poem*)	Aug.	63
Schlesinger, Arthur, jr.	On Heroic Leadership	Dec.	3
Seidensticker, Edward	Ideograph's Delight	July	67
	Running Riot	Oct.	64
Seton-Watson, Hugh	A Non-Communist Manifesto (*Book Review*)	Nov.	79
Silkin, Jon	For a Child on His Being Pronounced Mentally Defective by a Committee of the L.C.C. (*poem*)	July	50
Sillitoe, Alan	You Had a Dream Last Night (*poem*)	Oct.	37
Singer, Burns and Jerzy Peterkiewicz	Poems from the Polish	Nov.	43
Spender, Stephen	British Culture & Co.	Nov.	56

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ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Author	Title	Month	Page
Strachey, John	The Strangled Cry (I)	Nov.	3
	The Strangled Cry (II)	Dec.	23
Taylor, A. J. P.	Nobody's Uncle (*Book Review*)	Oct.	76
Thomson, Virgil	Looking Back on a Decade	Nov.	47
Toynbee, Philip	Artists at Odds (*Book Review*)	Nov.	74
Trevelyan, John	The Censor's Reply	Sept.	61
Turnell, Martin	Gide as Critic (*Book Review*)	Aug.	77
Ussher, Arland	The Jews (*Book Review*)	Nov.	70
Wain, John	"That Poor Little Swinburne" (*Book Review*)	Dec.	75
Weightman, J. G.	High, Low and Modern: a Reply	Sept.	66
Williams, Bernard	Sages and Hucksters (*Book Review*)	July	86
	Men and Ideas: Man as Agent (*Book Review*)	Nov.	38
Willmott, Peter and Michael Young	In the Suburban House	Oct.	69
Wilson, Angus	Paleskin's Redface (*Book Review*)	Aug.	82
Woodhouse, C. M.	Rebels and Revolutionaries (*Book Review*)	Sept.	76
Young, Michael and Peter Willmott	In the Suburban House	Oct.	69

BOOKS REVIEWED

Advertising: A New Approach. By Walter Taplin. (*Bernard Williams*)	July	86
The Affair. By C. P. Snow. (*Frank Kermode*)	July	73
Andre Gide: Pretexts. Edited by Justin O'Brien. (*Martin Turnell*)	Aug.	77
Apologies to the Iroquois. By Edmund Wilson. (*Angus Wilson*)	Aug.	82
Apples from Shinar. By Hyam Plutzik. (*Donald Hall*)	Sept.	83
The Autobiography of Mark Twain. Edited by Charles Neider. (*Marcus Cunliffe*)	Oct.	71
The Bachelors. By Muriel Spark. (*Anthony Hartley*)	Dec.	80
Brideshead Revisited. By Evelyn Waugh. (*Frank Kermode*)	Nov.	63
Casanova's Chinese Restaurant. By Anthony Powell. (*Frank Kermode*)	Sept.	71
Collected Poems. By Edwin Muir. (*Michael Hamburger*)	Dec.	46
Communism and British Intellectuals. By Neal Wood. (*Julius Gould*)	Oct.	80
The Crow and the Heart. By Hayden Carruth. (*Donald Hall*)	Sept.	83
A Dream of Governors. By Louis Simpson. (*Donald Hall*)	Sept.	83
Europe will not Wait. By Anthony Nutting. (*Alan Day*)	July	84
The Evidence of Love. By Dan Jacobson. (*Anthony Hartley*)	Sept.	80
The Fathers. By Allan Tate. (*Frank Kermode*)	Aug.	72
Graffiti. By Ramon Guthrie. (*Donald Hall*)	Sept.	83
A History of Militarism. By Alfred Vagts. (*James Joll*)	Oct.	82
I Am My Brother. By John Lehmann. (*T. R. Fyvel*)	July	82
James Joyce. By Richard Ellman. (*V. S. Pritchett*)	July	79
The Jews in Our Time. By Norman Bentwich. (*Arland Ussher*)	Nov.	70
The Leopard. By Giuseppe di Lampedusa. (*Frank Kermode*)	Aug.	72
The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin, Vol. I. By Alan Bullock. (*A. J. P. Taylor*)	Oct.	76
Light and Dark. By Barbara Howes. (*Donald Hall*)	Sept.	83
The Man Who Would be God. By Haakon Chevalier. (*Hans Meyerhoff*)	Oct.	74
The Man Without Qualities. By Robert Musil. (*Frank Kermode*)	Dec.	64
The Memorial. By Christopher Isherwood. (*Frank Kermode*)	Sept.	71
Molloy. Malone Dies. The Unnameable. By Samuel Beckett. (*Frank Kermode*)	July	73
Mr. Love and Justice. By Colin MacInnes. (*Anthony Hartley*)	Sept.	80

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Neither War Nor Peace. By H. R. Seton-Watson. (*Richard Lowenthal*)	Sept.	22
No Hatred and No Flag. Edited by Wolfgang G. Deppe, Christopher Middleton and Herbert Schönherr. (*Michael Hamburger*)	Oct.	53
An Occupation for Gentlemen. By Frederic Warburg. (*T. R. Fyvel*)	July	82
Out of Apathy. Edited by E. P. Thompson. (*G. L. Arnold*)	Aug.	76
Political Messianism. By J. L. Talmon. (*G. L. Arnold*)	Nov.	76
The Rebels. By Brian Crozier. (*C. M. Woodhouse*)	Sept.	76
Saint Judas. By James Wright. (*Donald Hall*)	Sept.	83
The Self-Made Man and Other Poems. By Reed Whittemore. (*Donald Hall*)	Sept.	83
The Stages of Economic Growth. By W. W. Rostow. (*Hugh Seton-Watson*)	Nov.	79
Take a Girl Like You. By Kingsley Amis. (*Anthony Hartley*)	Dec.	80
The Temple of the Golden Pavilion. By Yukio Mishima. (*Peter Hyun*)	Sept.	82
Thought and Action. By Stuart Hampshire. (*Bernard Williams*)	Nov.	38
Tolstoy or Dostoevsky. By George Steiner. (*Philip Toynbee*)	Nov.	74
The Truth about a Publisher. By Sir Stanley Unwin. (*T. R. Fyvel*)	July	82
Walls and Distances. By David Galler. (*Donald Hall*)	Sept.	83
When the Kissing Had to Stop. By Constantine FitzGibbon. (*Anthony Hartley*)	Sept.	80
Why They Collaborated. By Eugene Kinkead. (*William Peters*)	July	77
The Yale Edition of the Swinburne Letters. Edited by Cecil Y. Lang. (*John Wain*)	Dec.	75

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Nigel Dennis

The Pukey

MR. TROY's refusal to have a pukey in the house had caused enormous trouble in the family. "Pukeys are nasty, degenerate things," he said: "they make filthy messes all over the floor, they corrupt the young, they interrupt homework and sap the nation, and we have nowhere to put one." His wife would answer: "Well, well, we are getting distinguished, aren't we? It seems we're the Duke of Devonshire. Let me tell you that Blanche and Mabel both have pukeys in their drawing-rooms, and far from being corrupted, they are happier." Young Miss Troy appealed to her father's sense of status, saying: "Everywhere I go, Father, it's always: 'What did your pukey do last night?' I have to admit we haven't got one." "Oh, all right," said Mr. Troy, after a couple of years, "I'll let the pukey-man come and give a demonstration."

A few days later, the man arrived with the pukey and put its box against the wall opposite the fireplace. When Mrs. Troy asked: "Won't it catch the draught there?" the pukey-man only laughed and said: "The point about a pukey, madam, is that it's bred to be insensible." "But it is *alive*, isn't it?" asked Mrs. Troy quickly, "because we'd never pay for something dead. And if it's alive, won't the dog resent it?" "Both dog and budgie will be unconscious of it, madam," said the pukey-man, "a pukey speaks only to a human brain." "Well, cut the brainy cackle and open the box," said Mr. Troy roughly.

Let us admit at once that the first impression the pukey made on Mr. Troy was a good one. Even lying stupefied on the carpet, its eyes had a wondering gaze that fell hardly short of sweetness. "It's not just going to flop down like that all the time, is it?" asked Mr. Troy, to hide the fact that he liked it so far. "Give it a minute, my dear Sir!" begged the pukey-man, "it's hardly got its bearings." "Pay him no attention!" exclaimed Mrs. Troy, "he's been picking on pukeys for years." "Oh, what shall we *call* it?" cried Miss Troy.

She had hardly spoken when the pukey shuddered from snout to stern and let its muzzle fall right open, showing six rows of vivid pink gums and bubbles of sparkling saliva: "No teeth; that's curious!" muttered Mr. Troy. Then, with no warning, it vomited all over the carpet—a perfectly-filthy, greenish-yellow mess—causing Mrs. Troy to cry spontaneously: "Oh, the filthy little beast!" and Miss Troy to say: "Oh, Mum, don't *fuss*!" and Mr. Troy to say: "I told you it would foul everything up. Take the little brute away!" "An ounce of patience, if you please," asked the pukey-man, "or how can it grow on you?" "I'm sure that's true—and I don't mean I don't like it," said Mrs. Troy, rallying. "Isn't it actually *good* for the carpet?" Miss Troy asked the pukey-man, "I know the Vicar said, reasonably used, it was." "That is perfectly correct, Miss Troy," said the pukey-man, "it's not the vomit but the abuse of it." "Now, there's a remark I always like to hear," said Mr. Troy.

AT THAT moment the pukey, which had been staring at its own emission in a rather vague, contented way, changed its expression entirely. A sort of pathetic

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anguish came over its whole face: it held its snout sideways and looked at Miss Troy in a pleading, tender way. "Oh, *look!*" cried Mrs. Troy, "it's trying to say it didn't mean bad." They were all wrenched by the pukey's fawning expression, and when it slobbered and grovelled and brownish tears dripped from the corners of its eyes, Mrs. Troy could have hugged it. "Damned, sentimental, hypocritical brute!" said Mr. Troy, "I still reserve my judgment." But he was the first to jump in his seat when the pukey, suddenly throwing-up on to the carpet a clot of gritty mucus, followed this up with a string of shrieks and groans. Everyone was deafened except Miss Troy, who sensed at once that the pukey was illustrating the dilemma of girls of her own age in search of happiness. "Why, bless my soul!" said Mrs. Troy soon, "it's trying to have *sex*, that's what it is"—and sure enough, the pukey was now twisting its hindparts in the most indecent way and rubbing its flanks in its own vomit. "I'll not have that in *my* house," said Mrs. Troy, pursing her lips, "it's just plain filth, and showing-off." "My dear madam, it never actually *gets* there," said the pukey-man: "nothing ever really *happens*." "Oh, Mother, you and Father make everything seem obscene!" said Miss Troy, "even love." "Well, as long as it only suggests but can't actually do it, I don't mind," said Mrs. Troy, watching the pukey with a new curiosity. "My mind is still unmade up," said Mr. Troy.

Worn out, it seemed, by sexual frustration, the pukey lay still for a moment. Then, suddenly fixing its eye on Mrs. Troy, it gave her such a glare of horrible malignancy that she reached for her husband's arm. Next minute, there was a dreadful spectacle: throwing itself into a spasm of rage, the pukey began tearing and biting at its own body, like a thing bent on suicide. "Stop it! Stop it! Put the lid on!" screamed Mrs. Troy, "it's cruel, and drawing blood." "Frankly, you'll have to adjust to that, madam," said the pukey-man, "because it fights more than anything else." "Oh, then, that's decisive for me," said Mr. Troy, "because I love to see a good scrap." "It *is* the men who like that best," agreed the pukey-man, as the pukey went through the motions of winding its entrails round the throat of an enemy and jumping on his face. "I don't *mind* its fighting," Mrs. Troy said grudgingly, "but I'll put its lid on if it overdoes it. I like *beautiful* things best." The words, alas, were hardly out of her mouth when the pukey, sighting backwards over its spine like a mounted cowboy firing at his pursuers, shot her full in the face with an outrageous report. "Now, no grumbling, Mother!" screamed poor Miss Troy, knowing her mother's readiness to take affront. "But it's *not* nice!" protested Mrs. Troy, fanning herself with an evening paper. "Oh, Mother, can't you see it *means* nothing?" cried Miss Troy, "it's not like *us*, with our standards." "Standards or no," said Mrs. Troy, "I never saw Mabel's pukey do that to *her*." "Ah, but this is an improved model, madam," said the pukey-man.

"Am I correct in supposing," asked Mr. Troy, "that nothing substantial ever comes out of its rear end anyway?" "That is correct, sir," answered the pukey-man, "all secretion and excretion are purely visual and oral. The vent is hot air at most: hence, no sand-box." "Yet it has a belly on it," said Mr. Troy, "I know because I can see one." "You can see a belly, sir," answered the pukey-man, "but you can't see any guts, can you?" They all laughed at this, because it was so true.

After throwing-up another couple of times ("Mercy, what a messy little perisher it is!" said kind Mrs. Troy), the pukey became inordinately grave and a whole rash of wettish pimples spread over its face. "Well, you *are* in luck!" said the pukey-man, jumping up as if genuinely interested, "it never does this more than once a week at most. Can you guess what it is?" They all racked their brains, guessing everything from sewage-farming to guitar-playing, and still couldn't imagine; until Miss Troy, who was the quickest of the family, screamed: "*I* know! It's *thinking*!" "*Mes compliments*, young lady," said the pukey-man, bowing.

They all watched the pukey thinking,

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because it was so unexpected; but none of them really liked it. "When it vomits, it only makes me laugh," said Mr. Troy, "but when it thinks, *I* feel like vomiting." "I just feel nervous and embarrassed, like it was something you'd seen and shouldn't," said Mrs. Troy, and even Miss Troy for once agreed with her mother, saying, "You feel it's only doing it as a change from being sick, but it's the same really." "Don't judge it too hardly," said the pukey-man, "surely the wonder is that with no brains it can think at all." "Has it really no brains?" asked Mr. Troy, curious. "No, sir," said the pukey-man: "that's *why* its thinking makes you sick." "Funny sort of animal, I must say," said Mr. Troy, "thinks without brains, bites without teeth, throws-up with no guts, and screws without sex." "Oh, *please* stop it thinking!" begged Mrs. Troy. "I had an experience once that smelt like that." At which words, the pukey's pimples disappeared completely and, lying prone with its paws out, it gave Mrs. Troy a smug, complacent look, showing all its gums in a pleading whimpering. "Oh, the little angel! It wants to be congratulated for having thought!" cried Mrs. Troy: "then we *will*—yes! we *will*, you smelly little darling —you little, stinking, clever, mother's thing!" "I find that touching, too," said Mr. Troy, "no wonder there's so much nicker in pukeys." "It's for love and culture, too, Dad," Miss Troy reminded. "Thank you, Miss Troy," said the pukey-man, "we breeders tell ourselves that too."

DURING the next hour the pukey did all manner of things—such as marching like the Coldstream Guards, dancing and balancing on one paw like Pavlova, folding its arms like a Member of Parliament, singing the national anthem, plucking away at its parts mysteriously, fighting like mad, and making such vulgar explosive noises at both ends that the Troys were all left speechless with wonder. What charmed them as much as anything was feeling that the pukey made no distinction about what it did: whether it was fawning or screeching, or thinking or puking, it made it all like the same, because it loved each thing equally and looked at you always so proudly for it. "I can only say you breeders must be jolly highly-skilled," summed-up Mr. Troy, "to root out all the natural organs and still poison the air." "It's more a sixth sense than a skill," said the pukey-man modestly, "and one which your wife, I may say, seems to have instinctively." This was the first compliment Mrs. Troy had had since she gave birth to Miss Troy, and to cover her natural embarrassment she said sharply, "Well, put its lid on again now and take it away. We'll come and fill out the Never-never forms to-morrow."

With the pukey gone, it wasn't like the same home. The walls seemed to have been sprayed with a dribble the colour of maple-syrup, and dead flies kept dropping from the ceiling. The state of the carpet was beyond description, although the last thing the pukey had done before the lid closed was puff a sort of scented detergent powder over the stinking mess it had made. But the Troys were much too impressed to worry about the room: they could only think of buying the pukey and doing this every night. "It baffles me," said Mr. Troy, as they went to bed: "it's not human, it's not mechanical, it's not like any animal I've ever known." "What it leaves on the carpet is human through-and-through," said Mrs. Troy, and they all laughed at this because it was so true.

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Kingsley Amis

Lone Voices

Views of the 'Fifties

THE sociologising generalisation, that characteristic art-form of the mid-20th century, swells in volume and variety as we near the end of the 1950s. (All we have actually got to the end of is the years that start off 195–, as "Stickler for Accuracy" must surely have pointed out in a letter to, say, the *Budleigh Salterton Advertiser*; but the modern trend-hound takes no heed of that kind of pedantry.) There can be little harm in adding one more wafer to the hundredweights of labels loading down what I will agree to call the past decade, especially perhaps if its distinguishing mark is seen as that very urge to label, to unearth a new trend and hound it to death, to generalise. It is no accident, for example, that this period saw the emergence of the teen-age group as a self-conscious entity: after all, every other group was doing the same thing. Human spontaneity may well appear to have been worse damaged by the labellers than by any of the spectres they have so clamorously and repetitively labelled—mass culture, herd values, conspicuous consumption, status seeking, success ethics—and the multiplication of diagnosis itself is coming to the point where it obstructs cure.

I myself am not yet conscious of being positively impeded in my social round by the antics of generalisers; I have only reached the stage of firmly opting for any straight hour's-worth of mass-culture in preference to again being told about it. But I am disconcerted by the smallness of the remaining area in which I can behave without having, without already having had, my behaviour described and explained to me, evaluated, categorised. I can hardly catch sight of an American car without what I used to think was my natural curiosity being drowned out by a string of anti-commercials about male symbols and built-in obsolescence and keeping up with the Rockefellers. At the cinema I have a phantom Dwight Macdonald breathing down my neck with stuff about expensiveness and reassuringness and anonymity and *kitsch*. And almost any television programme turns out to be a duet between what the producers imagined they were up to and what Mr. Richard Hoggart, either in my mind's ear or —increasingly these days—right there on the screen in front of me, explains they are really up to.

IT IS A COMMONPLACE that the presence of an observer will affect that which he observes, and that while in some fields—astronomy, for instance—this perturbation can safely be ignored, the social or sociological areas are more sensitive. This is particularly so if the observer is as tirelessly vocal as he is to-day, when no book-page or literary section or TV discussion is complete without its review or article or expert testimony carrying cultural diagnostics a step further down. I say *down* partly in recognition of the almost equally commonplace fact that to have oneself diag-

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nosed to oneself is becoming a major popular sport among the diagnosable masses, as witness almost any day's TV programmes, the sales figures of the Riesmans and Packards and Whytes and their (duller) British equivalents, the Bermuda-shorted, blue-rinsed, small-town New Jersey housewife whom I recently overheard exclaiming passionately to a replica of herself: "Did you read this wonderful book *The Lonely Crowd*?" A couple of decades ago it would have been *Gone with the Wind*—better for everyone.

I gladly admit the appeal of social diagnostics, especially those in the anecdotal American vein, and I except from my strictures serious academic sociology such as that practised by the Institute of Community Studies associated with Bethnal Green and Greenleigh. But, these matters apart, I should like to see the trend-hound actively discouraged for an experimental period of a millennium or so. I view with misgiving the possibility that, by a grotesque irony, those seemingly responsible only for having named group-thinking will turn out to have helped it into power; just as Marx invented as much as discovered economic man, Freud instituted neurosis as a social fact in the course of exploring it as a clinical one. I do not want to contemplate a culture in which every other man is an upper-white-collar coronary-prone left-of-centre tradition-directed mass-valued pyknic infantile-anal togetherness-seeking Kinsey-group-B calcium-deficient mesomorph, *and knows it*. That notion outdoes, in both horror and plausibility, the right-wing jeremiah's prophecy of a huge delinquent majority maintained in prison and mental hospital by a tiny band of normals, and even its science-fiction equivalent, a society divided into Behavers and Observers, seems to me preferable to the extinction of unself-consciousness.

THAT the past ten years have been the worst, falsest, most cynical, most apathetic, most commercialised, most Americanised, richest in cultural decline of any in Britain's history is the theme pounded out by a double mixed orchestrally-accompanied choir of lone voices. And it would be merely perverse to deny that some of the tumult has been justified, or at least that some of the right persons have been annoyed thereby. But I have little of my own to add, am content to leave in other hands the agitation against the lack of ice in boat-train dining-cars, the H-bomb, the new Jacobethan store in central Swansea, the emergent Britain that (except as regards politeness and efficiency) bases itself on *New Yorker* travel ads, *Dotto*, the Royal Family—here perhaps, having a few months ago denounced Princess Margaret to the man who turned out very soon afterwards to be going to marry her, I might be thought to have special qualifications, yet even these I resign. It ill becomes one who feels that many of the drubbers deserve the most lavish drubbing to drub much himself.

Since I am writing an informal pique-piece, however, I will permit myself one minor drub. Advertising. All those lone voices no doubt agreed at some stage or other (they always do) that advertising was a bad thing before—with that characteristic restlessness Orwell noted in the British intellectual—passing on to horror-comics or what they thought was the latest Dulles gaffe. More recent developments, accordingly, have been rather less generally heeded. I start from the fact that, with some shining exceptions in the book trade and elsewhere, the majority of advertisers are as dishonest as they can get away with being, and the related fact that the talk they go in for about keeping the public informed and the standard up is vicious hot air—vicious because they believe it themselves and are trying hard and successfully to get other people to believe it too. Meanwhile they bash on with their fake consumer surveys, their pseudo-science, their publicity palmed off as fact, above all their high-grade imbecile notions of what is glamorous and exciting.

I was about to continue incautiously with the observation that commercial television is the greatest single vulgarising influence in our national life, but pulled myself up just in time. Apart from being inadmissibly over-obvious, that sort of thing is lone-voice talk.

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I mean that it is a protest made on behalf of others who are deemed too comatose or inarticulate to make it for themselves. There are some—children, lunatics, old-age pensioners, illiterates, unemployables, not to speak of the animal kingdom—who cannot fight their own battles, but these are fewer than is often supposed. What a splendid change it would make to find a trend-hound whose gaze was not exclusively directed outwards, an imbiber of Hoggart-wash (as an anonymous friend of mine has called it) who confessed to liking skiffle better than all those rotten old music-hall songs, an honorary watchdog of status-seeking who consciously set himself to seeking a bit of the stuff on his own account. Lone voices would sound much nicer, and loner, if their song were based on actual experience rather than on the putative corruption of some inadequately visualised pools-telly-and-fish-and-chips Everyman.

WITH this said, I should do my best to admit only to personal vexation, not to any part of the concern-disquiet-misgiving system that breeds so much altruistic insomnia, were I ever to state in detail my own modest objections to what advertising has been getting up to. Somewhere among these would come the idea that too many young people of demonstrable literacy were being attracted in that direction when choosing their career. They might in time come to raise the grade of imbecility obtaining there, but the thing is doing quite well enough already without mind, and where they are really needed is in teaching. Nobody who has not seen it in all its majesty—I speak as a university lecturer—can imagine the pit of ignorance and incapacity into which British education has sunk since the war. It is a pretty good pit not only in depth but laterally, for it takes in everyone from the kindergarten to the House of Lords, assuming these as opposite poles. Here at last I feel I have come up with a really man-sized Fifties trend, one which justifies the utmost dis—oops: one which disquiets and vexes me.

The trouble is not just illiteracy, even understanding this as including unsteady grasp of the fundamentals of a subject as well as unsteadiness with hard words like *goes* and *its*. But for the moment I want to drum the fact of that illiteracy into those who are playing what I have heard called the university numbers racket, those quantitative thinkers who believe that Britain is *falling behind* America and Russia by not producing as many university graduates per head, and that she must *catch up* by building *more* colleges which will turn out *more* graduates and so give us *more* technologists (especially them) and *more* school-teachers. I wish I could have a little tape-and-loudspeaker arrangement sewn into the binding of this magazine, to be triggered off by the light reflected from the reader's eyes on to this part of the page, and set to bawl out at several bels: MORE WILL MEAN WORSE.

I do not know whether it is better to have three really bad school-teachers where formerly there were two mediocre ones, and I have no information about what can be expected to happen to technologists, but I am quite sure that a university admissions policy demanding even less than it now demands—for that is what a larger intake means—will wreck academic standards beyond repair. Already a girl who has literally never heard of metre (I found this out last week) can come to a university to study English literature; what will her successors never have heard of if the doors are opened wider—rhyme, poem, sentence? Not only will examining standards have to be lowered to enable worse and worse people to graduate—you cannot let them all in and then not allow most of them to pass—but the good people will be less good than they used to be: this has been steadily happening ever since I started watching in 1949. Please do not think that I am resenting the prospect of being tugged into the hurly-burly and away from the little circle of devotees with whom I am currently exploring the niceties of Pope's use of the caesura. What I explore with the chaps already tends to be far more the niceties of who Pope was.

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My personal stake in this is twofold. I do not fancy teaching in something that is called a university but is really a rather less glamorous and authentic training college. And I do not fancy living in a society which has abandoned the notion of the university as a centre of learning. Powerful forces, both inside and outside its walls, are bringing this notion under ever more intense attack. The mere acceptance of expansion (we are promised a 50 per cent increase in students by 1970) is itself, I have argued, equivalent to such attack. Further, influential opinion takes the necessity of a de-naturing change as virtually beyond dispute. In the 11th May debate on education in the House of Lords, many of whose members must have attended a university some time in this century, we find Lord Beveridge saying: "The most important purpose of the university [is] to spread knowledge rather than add to it." Viscount Esher said (I quote from *The Times* of 12th May) that

> he would like everyone who felt the desire to be able to go to a university without an entrance examination and without cost. This would bring change and give variety to the pattern of university life. At present only boys and girls capable of getting a first or second had a chance of getting in. The pattern was stereotyped. Places must be found for the free-lance, the adventurers, young people of enterprise. . . .

Lord Esher is very far from being alone in his view that desire, rather than any archaic nonsense about capacity, should be an adequate entrance qualification, and the same holds true for his feeling that at present the university will take only the academically minded (in the contemptuous sense), whereas in fact it is already taking almost everyone who can read and write. I wish he would tell me where all his unfairly deprived adventurous enterprising free-lances are to be found. We could do with them.

MORE WILL MEAN WORSE. The delusion that there are thousands of young people about who are capable of benefiting from university training, but have somehow failed to find their way there, is of course a necessary component of the expansionist case. It means that one can confidently mention a thing called *quality* and say it will be *maintained*. University graduates, however, are like poems or bottles of hock, and unlike cars or tins of salmon, in that you cannot *decide* to have more good ones. All you can decide to have is more. And MORE WILL MEAN WORSE. Let me assure Lord Esher finally, and all whose prejudices run his way, that many university teachers work hard at *not* stereotyping their students. If many of these enter the great world in fuddled and temporary possession of tutorial opinions, this is because, after the most dedicated probing, they have shown no sign of forming any of their own.

The demand for expansion is frequently coupled with the demand for more science, and therefore less arts, in the university. We live in a scientific age, you see. It might be thought that this is just when you want more arts, but no. We are to have more "general courses" of mixed, *i.e.* diluted, science and arts, more science for the arts students—oh, and arts for the scientists too, naturally. If any policy-making educational body should ever turn away for a moment from its corps of nodding vice-chancellors and go so far as to consult someone actually engaged in teaching, they will be told (unless indeed they pick, as they will tend to and be encouraged to, one of the growing body of numbers-racketeers) that it is already hard enough to turn out an arts graduate who knows something about arts, without eating into his time at the university, and at school, in order to provide him with a smattering of biology or physics. What they will almost certainly not be told is that the humanities are in danger and must be defended. That case, to the permanent shame of those engaged in the humanities, is going by default. Last March I wrote to the *Observer* to attack some vulgar TV boost for technology, and enquired whether there was anybody who was prepared to "refute the phantom dichotomy of 'the two cultures,' repudiate the ever-more-widely accepted view of the humanities as behind the times, vague, decorative, marginal, contemplative, postponable, while

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science (which in this context usually means technology) is seen as up with the times, precise, essential, central, active, urgent." I had answer enough. There was nobody. Why are there no voices, lone or otherwise, in our arts faculties?

I AM sorry to have been so thin on trends, and for a time I contemplated pushing the score up a notch by naming, as the cultural disappointment of the decade or something like that, the revealed inadequacy of the *Scrutiny* school of criticism—its inability to praise anything Dr. Leavis has not praised first, to do so otherwise than in his prose style, and to deal with contemporary literature otherwise than by denigration, thus abdicating from the essential critical task (if there be such a thing) of trying to range modern writers in order. Everyone has been too occupied, I would have gone on to say, in saluting the institution of D. H. Lawrence as "a great English writer," to use the *ipsissima verba*, on which my comments would have been two: first, that Lawrence's arrival as a great Sinhalese or Ghanaian writer would have been more remarkable, and secondly, thank God he neither is nor has arrived as a great anything writer. From there I might have proceeded to trace to Lawrence a large part of the decline in sexual morality during the decade, noting the infective properties of his belief in selfish will, of his faith in the validity of mood and whim, and of that Calvinistic psychotheology whereby some are born to sweet delight, but very few apart from you and me, and those who dispute the arrangement are born to an endless night of the dirty little secret.

To get it all said properly, however, would have meant trying to read through some of Lawrence's books. And I am not even sure that there has been a decline in sexual morality. The trouble is—and hither I trace in part my failure with the trends—that the past decade is really the first I have noticed as such. I was only eight in 1930, and the 1940s were too unusual and, for me, too replete with incident to allow of much trend-truffling. Until 1945 or so I was mostly occupied either with thinking about having to join the army or, what is evidently much rarer among those of a literary bent, actually being in it. And then there I was back at Oxford, working, getting a degree, getting married, getting children, getting a job, getting settled here in Swansea. I kept telling myself, I remember, that I simply must look out of the window one of these days and notice how the 'Forties were doing, but something else kept coming up and stopping me. It was an unreflecting time.

I seem to myself now to be at a great distance from that cottage outside Oxford where I tried to write a book on Graham Greene, write a novel, prepare for a research degree and help to look after the baby. (The Greene opus got as far as the Argentinian university which for some unfathomable reason had commissioned it, but no further; the novel, which was about a young man rather like myself, only nastier, got finished but not published; the research degree was not granted. The baby, however, will soon be as tall as I am.) When I look back on the 'Fifties I can see, despite the quarts of adrenalin they made me release at times, small cause for complaint in matters affecting me personally. The world of letters, into which I finally contrived to infiltrate, proved benign, not at all in the grip of that "London literary racket" I had heard so much about before I got there. It contains, to be sure, some persons of more influence than ability, but however "disquieting" their existence may be, they have never done me any harm that I know of. And, starting off as a non-affluent non-Etonian without acquaintances in that world, I found it a surprisingly easy one to move about in.

Even that business about the Angry Young Men, which is going to look so wonderful if anyone remembers it in a few years' time, had its appealing side. It is difficult to sound sincere in repudiating free publicity, so I was lucky in never having to. In my case, the simplifications and distortions inevitable in gossipy booksy journalism fell short of tempting me irresistibly to break the writer's first rule and start explaining what I "really

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meant" by my books. And if it was boring at times to be asked by new acquaintances what I was so angry about, I was amply repaid on other occasions by seeing people wondering whether I was going to set about breaking up their furniture straight away or would wait till I was drunk. Sometimes I would meditate on how nice it would be if one's novels were read as novels instead of sociological tracts, but then one morning the whole shooting-match just softly and silently vanished away, and there we all were, reduced to being judged on our merits again. Which ought to be all right, if the merits hold up.

IF THEY do, then some of us will have the chance of becoming lone voices in the only way that really matters; by writing well. The less appealing side of the Angry Young Man business was that it embodied and encouraged a philistine, paraphrasing, digest-compiling attitude to literature, one which was favoured not only outside the phantom "movement" (on the dailies' book pages) but inside it as well (in the works of Colin Wilson and others). The taking of such a view is a constant temptation to everybody, not only where literature is concerned—I wonder how much of the vilification modern British philosophy encounters comes from its tendency to resist the act of paraphrase, to remain obdurately philosophical in the face of attempts to boil off its "technique" and reduce it to a series of assertions constituting a "world-view." But that is not my battle. Literature is, and the situation there is more serious, for this, as no other, is a field in which any fool can have an opinion. Nearly any fool, plus many non-fools in their weaker, more fatigued, less attentive moments, would rather read a book as a purée of trends and attitudes than as a work of art having its own unique, unparaphrasable qualities. And here comes my chance to do justice to *Scrutiny* by observing that at any rate it fought hard against this kind of philistinism, and that it represented the only important body of opinion on that side of the fight.

Any decent writer sees his first concern as the rendering of what he takes to be permanent in human nature, and this holds true no matter how "contemporary" his material. Now and again he may feel—we should perhaps think less of him if he did not ever feel —that there are some political causes too vast or urgent to be subordinated to mere literature, and will allow one or other such to determine the shape of what he writes. But by doing so he will have been guilty of betrayal. He will have accelerated the arrival of the day on which it is generally agreed that a novel or a poem or a play is no more than a system of generalisations orchestrated in terms of plot and diction and situation and the rest; the day, in other words, on which the novel, the poem, and the play cease to exist, and that is the worst prospect of all.

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Four poems by R. Pack Browning

Reply to a Question

How much do you write?
Not enough. The sight
Of the seagull's solo over
Trees and treasons, flight
Out of day, lover
Above loving, could cover
Easily every page I might
Scrawl. My questionable right
To meddle, to try to recover
In black ink the white
Passion, makes my pen hover,
Unmoved by its meek mover.

Vocation

Ring my finger with the right rock:
Wrap it with the deepest diamond rooted
In a smooth strap of steel. Lock
The ring with fire and call me wedded.
This ceremony should appease their talk.

Pigeons

The sounds about the house were sad
All down the day. The pigeons had
Opened their mouths to the wind and blown
Low slow tones down
The curling currents since dawn. Enter,
Spoke the air, and out of center
Soared my soul to stare for the sun.
Swallowing the sky, I made the run
Up air like shot steam. Then, like lead,
Dropped. Night had built a pigeons' bed.

Gulls

Saucers sliding down the slow sluice
Of the sloped wind ways,
The gulls go low over the land,
Seeing, speaking their search.

Who comes off the air, let to the land
After wide flight, stayed,
Knows the right rocks underfoot:
The good gull, good-grounded.

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Isaiah Berlin

Russian Populism

RUSSIAN Populism is the name not of a single political party, nor of a coherent body of doctrine, but of a widespread radical movement in Russia in the middle of the 19th century. It was born during the great social and intellectual ferment which followed the death of Tsar Nicholas I and the defeat and humiliation of the Crimean War, grew to fame and influence during the 'sixties and 'seventies, and reached its culmination with the assassination of Tsar Alexander II, after which it swiftly declined. Its leaders were men of very dissimilar origins, outlooks, and capacities; it was not at any stage more than loose congeries of small independent groups of conspirators or their sympathisers, who sometimes united for common action, and at other times operated in isolation. These groups tended to differ both about ends and about means. Nevertheless they held certain fundamental beliefs in common, and possessed sufficient moral and political solidarity to entitle them to be called a single movement. Like their predecessors, the Decembrist conspirators in the 'twenties, and the circles that gathered round Alexander Herzen and Belinsky in the 'thirties and 'forties, they looked on the government and the social structure of their country as a moral and political monstrosity—obsolete, barbarous, stupid, and odious—and dedicated their lives to its total destruction. Their general ideas were not original. They shared the democratic ideals of the European radicals of their day, and in addition believed that the struggle between social and economic classes was the determining factor in politics; they held this theory not in its Marxist form (which did not effectively reach Russia until the 'seventies) but in the form in which it was taught by Proudhon and Herzen, and before them by Saint-Simon, Fourier, and other French socialists and radicals whose writings had entered Russia, legally and illegally, in a thin but steady stream for several decades.

The theory of social history as dominated by the class war—the heart of which is the notion of the coercion of the "have-nots" by the "haves"—was born in the course of the Industrial Revolution in the West; and its most characteristic concepts belong to the capitalist phase of economic development. Economic classes, capitalism, cut-throat competition, proletarians and their exploiters, the evil power of unproductive finance, the inevitability of increasing centralisation and standardisation of all human activities, the transformation of men into commodities and the consequent "alienation" of individuals and groups and degradation of human lives—these notions are fully intelligible only in the context of expanding industrialism. Russia, even as late as the 'fifties, was one of the least industrialised states in Europe. Nevertheless, exploitation and misery had long been amongst the most familiar and universally recognised characteristics of its social life, the principal victims of the system being the peasants, both serfs and free, who formed over nine-tenths of its population. An industrial proletariat had indeed come into being, but by mid-century did not exceed two or three per cent of the population of the Empire. Hence the cause of the oppressed was still at that date overwhelmingly that of the agricultural workers who formed the lowest stratum of the population, the vast majority being serfs in state or private possession. The Populists looked upon them as martyrs whose grievances they were

This essay forms the greater part of Sir Isaiah's introduction to the English translation of Professor Franco Venturi's Il Populismo Russo, *shortly to be issued by Messrs. Weidenfeld & Nicolson.*

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determined to avenge and remedy, and as embodiments of simple uncorrupted virtue, whose social organisation (which they largely idealised) was the natural foundation on which the future of Russian society must be rebuilt.

Justice and Equality

THE central Populist goals were social justice and social equality. Most of them were convinced, following Herzen, whose revolutionary propaganda in the 'fifties influenced them more than any other single set of ideas, that the essence of a just and equal society existed already in the Russian peasant commune—the *obshchina*, organised in the form of a collective unit called the *mir*. The *mir* was a free association of peasants which periodically redistributed the agricultural land to be tilled; its decisions bound all its members, and constituted the corner-stone on which, so the Populists maintained, a federation of socialised, self-governing units, conceived along lines popularised by the French socialist Proudhon, could be erected. The Populist leaders believed that this form of co-operation offered the possibility of a free and democratic social system in Russia, originating as it did in the deepest moral instincts and traditional values of Russian, and indeed all human, society, and they believed that the workers (by which they meant all productive human beings), whether in town or country, could bring this system into being with a far smaller degree of violence or coercion than had occurred in the industrial West. This system, since it alone sprang naturally from fundamental human needs and a sense of the right and the good that existed in all men, would ensure justice, equality, and the widest opportunity for the full development of human faculties. As a corollary of this, the Populists believed that the development of large-scale centralised industry was not "natural," and therefore led inexorably to the degradation and dehumanisation of all those who were caught in its tentacles: capitalism was an appalling evil, destructive of body and soul; but it was not inescapable. They denied that social or economic progress was necessarily bound up with the Industrial Revolution. They maintained that the application of scientific truths and methods to social and individual problems (in which they passionately believed), although it might, and often did, lead to the growth of capitalism, could be realised without this fatal sacrifice. They believed that it was possible to improve life by scientific techniques without necessarily destroying the natural life of the peasant village, or creating a vast, pauperised, faceless city proletariat. Capitalism seemed irresistible only because it had not been sufficiently resisted. However it might be in the West, in Russia "the curse of bigness" could still be successfully fought, and federations of small self-governing units of producers, as Fourier and Proudhon had advocated, could be fostered, and indeed created, by deliberate action. Like their French masters, the Russian disciples held the institution of the state in particular hatred, since to them it was at once the symbol, the result, and the main source, of injustice and inequality—a weapon wielded by the governing class to defend its own privileges—and one that, in the face of increasing resistance from its victims, grew progressively more brutal and blindly destructive.

The defeat of liberal and radical movements in the West in 1848–9 confirmed them in their conviction that salvation did not lie in politics or political parties: it seemed clear to them that liberal parties and their leaders had neither understood nor made a serious effort to forward the fundamental interests of the oppressed populations of their countries. What the vast majority of peasants in Russia (or workers in Europe) needed was to be fed and clothed, to be given physical security, to be rescued from disease, ignorance, poverty, and humiliating inequalities. As for political rights, votes, parliaments, republican forms, these were meaningless and useless to ignorant, barbarous, half-naked and starving men; such programmes merely mocked their misery. The Populists shared with the nationalistic Russian Slavophils (with whose political ideas they had otherwise little in common) a loathing of the rigidly class-conscious social pyramid of the West that was complacently accepted, or fervently believed in, by the conformist bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy to whom this bourgeoisie looked up.

The satirist Saltykov, in his famous dialogue between a German and a Russian boy, immortalised this attitude when he declared his faith in the Russian boy, hungry and in rags, stumbling in the mud and squalor of the accursed, slave-owning Tsarist régime, because he had not, like the neat, docile, smug, well-fed, well-dressed German boy, bartered away his soul for the sixpence that the Prussian official had offered him, and was consequently capable, if only he was allowed to do so (as the German boy no longer was), of rising one day to his full human height.

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Russia was in darkness and in chains, but her spirit was not captive; her past was black, but her future promised more than the death in life of the civilised middle classes in Germany or France or England, who had long ago sold themselves for material security and had become so apathetic in their shameful, self-imposed servitude that they no longer knew how to want to be free.

The Populists, unlike the Slavophils, did not believe in the unique character or destiny of the Russian people. They were not mystical nationalists. They believed only that Russia was a backward nation which had not reached the stage of social and economic development at which the Western nations (whether or not they could have avoided this) had entered upon the path of unrestrained industrialism. They were not, for the most part, historical determinists; consequently they believed that it was possible for a nation in such a predicament to avoid this fate by the exercise of intelligence and will. They saw no reason why Russia could not benefit by Western science and Western technology without paying the appalling price paid by the West. They argued that it was possible to avoid the despotism of a centralised economy or a centralised government by adopting a loose, federal structure composed of self-governing, socialised units both of producers and of consumers. They held that it was desirable to organise, but not to lose sight of other values in the pursuit of organisation as an end in itself; to be governed primarily by ethical and humanitarian and not solely by economic and technological—"ant-hill" —considerations. They declared that to protect human individuals against exploitation by turning them into an industrial army of collectivised robots was self-stultifying and suicidal. The ideas of the Populists were often unclear, and there were sharp differences among them, but there was an area of agreement wide enough to constitute a genuine movement. Thus they accepted, in broad outline, the educational and moral lessons, but not the state worship, of Rousseau. Some of them—indeed perhaps the majority—shared Rousseau's belief in the goodness of simple men, his conviction that the cause of corruption is the crippling effect of bad institutions, his acute distrust of all forms of cleverness, of intellectuals and specialists, of all self-isolating *côteries* and factions. They accepted the anti-political ideas, but not the technocratic centralism, of Saint-Simon. They shared the belief in conspiracy and violent action preached by Babeuf and his disciple Buonarotti, but not their Jacobin authoritarianism. They stood with Sismondi and Proudhon and Lamennais and the other orginators of the notion of the welfare state, against, on the one hand, *laissez-faire*, and, on the other, central authority, whether nationalist or socialist, whether temporary or permanent, whether preached by List, or Mazzini, or Lassalle, or Marx. They came close at times to the positions of Western Christian socialists, without, however, any religious faith, since, like the French Encyclopædists of the previous century, they believed in "natural" morality and scientific truth. These were some of the beliefs that held them together. But they were divided by differences no less profound.

The Peasants

THE first and greatest of their problems was their attitude towards the peasants in whose name all that they did was done. Who was to show the peasants the true path to justice and equality? Individual liberty is not, indeed, condemned by the Populists, but it tends to be regarded as a liberal catchword, liable to distract attention from immediate social and economic tasks. Should one train experts to teach the ignorant younger brothers—the tillers of the soil, and, if need be, stimulate them to resist authority, to revolt and destroy the old order before the rebels had themselves fully grasped the need or meaning of such acts? That is the view of such dissimilar figures as Bakunin and Speshnev in the 'forties; it was preached by Chernyshevsky in the 'fifties, and was passionately advocated by Zaichnevsky and the Jacobins of "Young Russia" in the 'sixties; it was preached by Lavrov in the 'seventies and 'eighties, and equally by his rivals and opponents —the believers in disciplined professional terrorism—Nechaev and Tkachev, and their followers who include—for this purpose alone—not only the Socialist-Revolutionaries but also some of the most fanatical Russian Marxists, in particular Lenin and Trotsky.

Some among them asked whether this training of revolutionary groups might not create an arrogant *élite* of seekers of power and autocracy, men who would, at best, believe it their duty to give the peasants not what the peasants asked for but what they—their self-appointed mentors —thought good for them, namely, that which the masses ought to ask for, whether they in fact did so or not. They pushed the question farther,

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and asked whether this would not, in due course, breed fanatical men who would pay too little heed to the actual wants of the vast majority of the Russian population, intent on forcing upon them only what they—the dedicated order of professional revolutionaries, cut off from the life of the masses by their own special training and conspiratorial lives—had chosen for them, ignoring the hopes and protests of the people itself. Was there not a terrible danger here of the substitution of a new yoke for the old, of a despotic oligarchy of intellectuals in the place of the nobility and the bureaucracy and the Tsar? What reason was there for thinking that the new masters would prove less oppressive than the old? This was argued by some among the terrorists of the 'sixties—Ishutin and Karakozov, for example—and even more forcibly by the majority of the idealistic young men, who "went among the people" in the 'seventies and later, with the aim not so much of teaching others as of themselves learning how to live, in a state of mind inspired by Rousseau (and perhaps by Nekrasov or Tolstoy) at least as much as by the more tough-minded social theorists. These young men, the so-called "repentant gentry," believed themselves to have been corrupted not merely by an evil social system but by the very process of liberal education which makes for deep inequalities and inevitably lifts scientists, writers, professors, experts, civilised men in general, too high above the heads of the masses, and so itself becomes the richest breeding-ground of injustice and class oppression; everything that obstructs understanding between individuals or groups or nations, that creates and keeps in being obstacles to human solidarity and fraternity is *eo ipso* evil; specialisation and university education build walls between men, prevent individuals and groups from "connecting," kill love and friendship, and are among the major causes responsible for what, after Hegel and his followers, came to be called the "alienation" of entire orders or classes or cultures. Some among the Populists contrived to ignore or evade this problem. Bakunin, for example, who, if not a Populist himself, influenced Populism profoundly, denounced faith in intellectuals and experts as liable to lead to the most ignoble of tyrannies—the rule of scientists and pedants—but would not face the problem of whether the revolutionaries had come to teach or to learn. It was left unanswered by the terrorists of the "People's Will" and their sympathisers. More sensitive and morally scrupulous thinkers—Chernyshevsky and Kropotkin, for example, felt the oppressive weight of the question, and did not attempt to conceal it from themselves; yet whenever they asked themselves by what right they proposed to impose this or that system of social organisation on the mass of peasants who had grown up in a wholly different way of life, and one that might embody far profounder values of its own, they gave no clear reply. The question became even more acute when it was asked (as it increasingly came to be in the 'sixties) what was to be done if the peasants actually resisted the revolutionaries' plans for their liberation? Must the masses be deceived, or, worse still, coerced? No one denied that in the end it was the people and not the revolutionary *élite* that must govern, but in the meanwhile how far was one allowed to go in ignoring the majority's wishes, or in forcing them into courses which they plainly loathed? This was by no means a merely academic problem. The first enthusiastic adherents of radical Populism—the missionaries who went "to the people" in the famous summer of 1874—were met by mounting indifference, suspicion, resentment, and sometimes active hatred and resistance, on the part of their would-be beneficiaries who, as often as not, handed them over to the police. The Populists were thus forced to define their attitude explicitly, since they believed passionately in the need to justify their activities by rational argument. Their answers. when they came, were far from unanimous. The activists, men like Tkachev, Nechaev, and, in a less political sense, Pisarev, whose admirers came to be known as Nihilists, anticipated Lenin in their contempt for democratic methods. Since the days of Plato, it has been argued that the spirit was superior to the flesh, and those who know must govern those who do not. The educated cannot listen to the uneducated and ignorant masses. The masses must be rescued by whatever means were available, if necessary against their own foolish wishes, by guile or fraud, or violence if need be. But it was only a minority in the movement who accepted this division and the authoritarianism that it entailed. The majority were horrified by the open advocacy of such Machiavellian tactics, and thought that no end, however good, could fail to be destroyed by the adoption of monstrous means.

A similar conflict broke out over the attitude to the state. All Russian Populists were agreed that the state was the embodiment of a system of coercion and inequality, and therefore in-

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trinsically evil; neither justice nor happiness were possible until it was eliminated. But in the meanwhile what was to be the immediate aim of the revolution? Tkachev is quite clear that until the capitalist enemy had been finally destroyed, the weapon of coercion—the pistol torn from his hand by the revolutionaries—must on no account be thrown away, but must itself be turned against him. In other words the machinery of the state must not be destroyed, but must be used against the inevitable counter-revolution; it cannot be dispensed with until the last enemy has been—in Proudhon's immortal phrase—successfully liquidated, and mankind consequently has no further need of any instrument of coercion. In this doctrine he was followed by Lenin more faithfully than mere adherence to the ambivalent Marxist formula about the dictatorship of the proletariat seemed to require. Lavrov, who represents the central stream of Populism, and reflects all its vacillations and confusions, characteristically advocated not indeed the immediate or total elimination of the state but its systematic reduction to something vaguely described as the minimum. Chernyshevsky, who is the least anarchistic of the Populists, conceives of the state as the organiser and protector of the free associations of peasants or workers, and contrives to see it at once as centralised and decentralised, a guarantee of order and efficiency, and of equality and individual liberty too.

Utopian Dream

All these thinkers share one vast apocalyptic assumption: that once the reign of evil—autocracy, exploitation, inequality—is consumed in the fire of the revolution, there will arise naturally and spontaneously out of its ashes a natural, harmonious, just order, needing only the gentle guidance of the enlightened revolutionaries to attain its proper perfection. This great Utopian dream, based on simple faith in regenerated human nature, was a vision which the Populists shared with Godwin and Bakunin, Marx and Lenin. Its heart is the pattern of sin and death and resurrection—of the road to the earthly paradise, the gates of which will only open if men find the one true way and follow it. Its roots lie deep in the religious imagination of mankind; and there is therefore nothing surprising in the fact that this secular version of it had strong affinities with the faith of the Russian Old Believers—the dissenting sects—for whom, since the great religious schism of the 17th century, the Russian state and its rulers, particularly Peter the Great, represented the rule of Satan upon earth; this persecuted religious underground provided a good many potential allies whom the Populists made efforts to mobilise. There were deep divisions among the Populists; they differed about the future role of the intellectuals, as compared with that of the peasants; they differed about the historical importance of the rising class of capitalists, gradualism versus conspiracy, education and propaganda versus terrorism and preparation for immediate risings. All these questions were interrelated and they demanded immediate solutions. But the deepest rift among the Populists arose over the urgent question of whether a truly democratic revolution could possibly occur before a sufficient number of the oppressed had become fully conscious—that is, capable of understanding and analysing the causes of their intolerable condition. The moderates argued that no revolution could justly be called democratic unless it sprang from the rule of the revolutionary majority. But in that event, there was perhaps no alternative to waiting until education and propaganda had created this majority—a course that was being advocated by almost all Western socialists—Marxist and non-Marxist alike—in the second half of the 19th century. Against this the Russian Jacobins argued that to wait, and in the meanwhile to condemn all forms of revolt organised by resolute minorities as irresponsible terrorism or, worse still, as the replacement of one despotism by another, would lead to catastrophic results: while the revolutionaries procrastinated, capitalism would develop rapidly; the breathing-space would enable the ruling class to develop a social and economic base incomparably stronger than that which it possessed at present; the growth of a prosperous and energetic capitalism would create opportunities of employment for the radical intellectuals themselves: doctors, engineers, educators, economists, technicians, and experts of all types would be assigned profitable tasks and positions, their new bourgeois masters (unlike the existing régime) would be intelligent enough not to force them into any kind of political conformity; the intelligentsia would obtain special privileges, status, and wide opportunities for self-expression—harmless radicalism would be tolerated, a good deal of personal liberty permitted—and in this way the revolutionary cause would lose its more valuable recruits. Once those whom insecurity and dis-

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content had driven into making common cause with the oppressed had been partially satisfied, the incentive to revolutionary activity would be weakened, and the prospects of a radical transformation of society would become exceedingly dim. The radical wing of the revolutionaries argued with great force that the advance of capitalism, whatever Marx might say, was not inevitable; it might be so in Western Europe, but in Russia it could still be arrested by a revolutionary *coup*, destroyed in the root before it had had time to grow too strong. If recognition of the need to awaken the "political consciousness" of the majority of the workers and peasants (which by this time, and partly as a result of the failure of the intellectuals in 1848, had been pronounced absolutely indispensable to the revolution both by Marxists and by the majority of the Populist leaders) was tantamount to the adoption of a gradualist programme, the moment for action would surely be missed; and in place of the Populist or socialist revolution would there not arise a vigorous, imaginative, predatory, successful capitalist régime which would succeed Russian semi-feudalism as surely as it had replaced the feudal order in Western Europe? And then who could tell how many decades or centuries might elapse before the arrival, at long last, of the revolution? When it did arrive, who could tell what kind of order it would, by that time, instal—resting upon what social basis?

All Populists were agreed that the village commune was the ideal embryo of those socialist groups on which the future society was to be based. But would the development of capitalism not automatically destroy the commune? And if it was maintained (although perhaps this was not explicitly asserted before the 'eighties) that capitalism was already destroying the *mir*, that the class struggle, as analysed by Marx, was dividing the villages as surely as the cities, then the plan of action was clear: rather than sit with folded hands and watch this disintegration fatalistically, resolute men could and must arrest this process, and save the village commune. Socialism, so the Jacobins argued, could be introduced by the capture of power to which all the energies of the revolutionaries must be bent, even at the price of postponing the task of educating the peasants in moral, social, and political realities; indeed, such education could surely be promoted more rapidly and efficiently after the revolution had broken the resistance of the old régime. This line of thought, which bears an extraordinary resemblance, if not to the actual words, then to the policies pursued by Lenin in 1917, was basically very different from the older Marxist determinism. Its perpetual refrain was that there was no time to lose. Kulaks were devouring the poorer peasants in the country, capitalists were breeding fast in the towns. If the government possessed even a spark of intelligence, it would make concessions and promote reforms, and by this means divert educated men whose will and brain was needed for the revolution into the peaceful paths of the service of the reactionary state; propped up by such liberal measures, the unjust order would continue and be strengthened. The activists argued that there was nothing inevitable about revolutions: they were the fruit of human will and human reason. If there were not enough of these, the revolution might never take place at all. It was only the insecure who craved social solidarity and communal life; individualism was always a luxury, the ideal of the socially established. The new class of technical specialists—the modern, enlightened, energetic men celebrated by liberals like Kavelin and Turgenev, and at times, even by the radical individualist Pisarev—were for the Jacobin Tkachev, "worse than cholera or typhus," for by applying scientific methods to social life they were playing into the hands of the new, rising capitalist oligarchs and thereby obstructing the path to freedom. Palliatives were fatal when only an operation could save the patient: it merely prolonged his disease and weakened him so much that in the end not even an operation could save him. One must strike before these new, potentially conformist, intellectuals had grown too numerous and too comfortable and had obtained too much power, for otherwise it would be too late: a Saint-Simonian *élite* of highly-paid managers would preside over a new feudal order—an economically efficient but socially immoral society, in as much as it was based on permanent inequality.

THE greatest of all evils was inequality. Whenever any other ideal came into conflict with equality, the Russian Jacobins always called for its sacrifice or modification; the first principle upon which all justice rested was that of equality; no society was equitable in which there was not a maximum degree of equality between men. If the revolution was to succeed, three major fallacies had to be fought and rooted out. The first was that men of culture

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alone created progress. This was not true, and had the bad consequence of inducing faith in *élites*. The second was the opposite illusion—that everything must be learnt from the common people. This was equally false. Rousseau's Arcadian peasants were so many idyllic figments. The masses were ignorant, brutal, reactionary, and did not understand their own needs or good. If the revolution depended upon their maturity, or capacity for political judgment or organisation, it would certainly fail. The last fallacy was that only a proletarian majority could successfully make a revolution. No doubt a proletarian majority might do that, but if Russia was to wait until it possessed one, the opportunity of destroying a corrupt and detested government would pass, and capitalism would be found to be too firmly in the saddle.

What, then, must be done? Men must be trained to make the revolution and destroy the present system and all obstacles to social equality and democratic self-government. When this was achieved, a democratic assembly was to be convened, and if those who made the revolution took care to explain the reasons for it, and the social and economic situation that made it necessary, then the masses, benighted though they might be to-day, would assuredly, in the view of the Jacobins, grasp their condition sufficiently to allow themselves to be—indeed to welcome the opportunity of being—organised into the new free federation of productive associations. But supposing they were still, on the morrow of a successful *coup d'état*, not mature enough to see this? Herzen did indeed ask this awkward question again and again in his writings in the late 'sixties. The majority of the Populists were deeply troubled by it. But the activist wing had no doubt of the answer: strike the chains from the captive hero, and he will stretch himself to his full height and live in freedom and happiness for ever after. The views of these men were astonishingly simple. They believed in terrorism and more terrorism to achieve complete, anarchist, liberty. The purpose of the revolution, for them, was to establish absolute equality, not only economic and social, but "physical and physiological": they saw no discrepancy between this bed of Procrustes and absolute freedom. This order would be imposed in the beginning by the power and authority of the state, after which, the state, having fulfilled its purpose, would swiftly "liquidate" itself.

Against this, the spokesman of the main body of the Populists argued that Jacobin means tended to bring about Jacobin consequences: if the purpose of the revolution was to liberate, it must not use the weapons of despotism that were bound to enslave those whom they were designed to liberate: the remedy must not prove more destructive than the disease. To use the state to break the power of the exploiters and to impose a specific form of life upon a people, the majority of whom had not been educated to understand the need for it, was to exchange the Tsarist yoke for a new, not necessarily less crushing one—that of the revolutionary minority. The majority of the Populists were deeply democratic; they believed that all power tended to corrupt, that all concentration of authority tended to perpetuate itself, that all centralisation was coercive and evil, and, therefore, the sole hope of a just and free society lay in the peaceful conversion of men by rational argument to the truths of social and economic justice and democratic freedom. In order to obtain the opportunity of converting men to this vision, it might indeed be necessary to break the existing obstacles to free and rational intercourse—the police state, the power of capitalists or of landowners—and to use force in the process, whether mass mutiny or individual terrorism. But this concept of temporary measures presented itself to them as something wholly different from leaving absolute power in the hands of any party or group, however virtuous, once the power of the enemy had been broken. Their case is the classical case, during the last two centuries, of every libertarian and federalist against Jacobins and centralisers; it is Voltaire's case against both Helvétius and Rousseau; that of the left wing of the Gironde against the Mountain; Herzen used these arguments against doctrinaire Communists of the immediately preceding period—Cabet and the disciples of Babeuf; Bakunin denounced the Marxist demand for the dictatorship of the proletariat as something that would merely transfer power from one set of oppressors to another; the Populists of the 'eighties and 'nineties urged this against all those whom they suspected of conspiring (whether they realised it or not) to destroy individual spontaneity and freedom, whether they were *laissez-faire* liberals who allowed factory owners to enslave the masses, or radical collectivists who were ready to do so themselves; whether they were capitalist *entrepreneurs* (as Mikhailovsky wrote to Dostoyevsky

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in his celebrated criticism of his novel *The Possessed*) or Marxist advocates of centralised authority if anything; indeed, they looked upon the latter as the more dangerous—as brutal, amoral "social Darwinists," profoundly hostile to variety and individual freedom and character.

This, again, was the main political issue which, at the turn of the century, divided the Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries from the Social-Democrats; and over which a few years later, both Plekhanov and Martov broke with Lenin: indeed the great quarrel between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks (whatever its ostensible cause) turned upon it. In due course Lenin himself, two or three years after the October revolution, while he never abandoned the central Marxist doctrine, expressed his bitter disappointment with those very consequences of it which his opponents had predicted—bureaucracy and the arbitrary despotism of the party officials; and Trotsky accused Stalin of this same crime. The dilemma of means and ends is the deepest and most agonising problem that torments the revolutionary movements of our own day in all the continents of the world, not least in Asia and Africa. That this debate took so clear and articulate a form within the Populist movement makes its development exceptionally relevant to our own predicament.

Revolutionary Faith

All these differences occurred within the framework of a common revolutionary outlook, for, whatever their disagreements, all Populists were united by an unshakable faith in the revolution. This faith derived from many sources. It sprang from the needs and outlook of a society still overwhelmingly pre-industrial, which gave the craving for simplicity and fraternity, and the agrarian idealism which derives ultimately from Rousseau—a reality which can still be seen in India and Africa to-day, and which necessarily looks Utopian to the eyes of social historians born in the industrialised West. It was a consequence of the disillusionment with parliamentary democracy, liberal convictions, and the good faith of bourgeois intellectuals that resulted from the fiasco of the European revolutions of 1848–9, and from the particular conclusion drawn by Herzen that Russia, which had not suffered this revolution, might find her salvation in the undestroyed natural socialism of the peasant *mir*. It was deeply influenced by Bakunin's violent diatribes against all forms of central authority, and in particular the state; and by his vision of men as being by nature peaceful and productive, and rendered violent only when they are perverted from their proper ends, and forced to be either gaolers or convicts. But it was also fed by the streams that flowed in a contrary direction: by Tkachev's faith in a Jacobin *élite* of professional revolutionaries as the only force capable of destroying the advance of capitalism helped on its fatal path by innocent reformists and humanitarians and careerist intellectuals, and concealed behind the repulsive sham of parliamentary democracy; even more by the passionate utilitarianism of Pisarev, and his brilliant polemics against all forms of idealism and amateurishness, and, in particular, the sentimental idealisation of the simplicity and beauty of peasants in general, and of Russian peasants in particular, as beings touched by grace, remote from the corrupting influences of the decaying West. It was supported by the appeal which these "critical realists" made to their compatriots to save themselves by self-help and hard-headed energy—a kind of neo-Encyclopædist campaign in favour of natural science, skill, and professionalism, directed against the humanities, classical learning, history, and other forms of "sybaritic" self-indulgence. Above all, it contrasted "realism" with the literary culture which had lulled the best men in Russia into a condition where corrupt bureaucrats, stupid and brutal landowners, and an obscurantist church could exploit them or let them rot, while æsthetes and liberals looked the other way.

But the deepest strain of all, the very centre of the Populist outlook, was the individualism and rationalism of Lavrov and Mikhailovsky. With Herzen they believed that history followed no predetermined pattern, that it possessed "no libretto," that neither the violent conflicts between cultures, nations, classes (which for Hegelians constituted the essence of human progress), nor the struggles for power by one class over another (represented by Marxists as being the motive force of history) were inevitable. Faith in human freedom was the corner-stone of Populist humanism: the Populists never tired of repeating that ends were chosen by men, not imposed upon them, and that men's wills alone could construct a happy and honourable life—a life in which the interests of intellectuals, peasants, manual workers, and the liberal professions could be reconciled; not indeed made wholly to coincide, for that was an unattainable ideal;

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but adjusted in an unstable equilibrium, which human reason and constant human care could adjust to the largely unpredictable consequences of the interaction of men with each other and with nature. It may be that the tradition of the Orthodox Church with its conciliar and communal principles and deep antagonism both to the authoritarian hierarchy of the Roman Church, and the individualism of the Protestants, also exercised its share of influence. These doctrines and these prophets and their Western masters—French radicals before and after the French revolution, as well as Fichte and Buonarotti, Fourier and Hegel, Mill and Proudhon, Owen and Marx, played their part. But the largest figure in the Populist movement, the man whose temperament, ideas, and activities dominated it from beginning to end, is undoubtedly that of Nikolai Gavrilovich Chernyshevsky and his immediate allies and followers. The influence of his life and teachings, despite a multitude of monographs, still await its interpreter.

Chernyshevsky

Nicholas Chernyshevsky was not a man of original ideas. He did not possess the depth, the imagination, or the brilliant intellect and literary talent of Herzen; nor the eloquence, the boldness, the temperament or the reasoning power of Bakunin, nor the moral genius and unique social insight of Belinsky. But he was a man of unswerving integrity, immense industry, and a capacity rare among Russians for concentration upon concrete detail. His deep, steady, lifelong hatred of slavery, injustice, and irrationality, did not express itself in large theoretical generalisations, or the creation of a sociological or metaphysical system, or violent action against authority. It took the form of slow, uninspired, patient accumulation of facts and ideas—a crude, dull, but powerful intellectual structure on which one might found a detailed policy of practical action appropriate to the specific Russian environment which he desired to alter. Chernyshevsky was in greater sympathy with the concrete, carefully elaborated socialist plans, however mistaken they might be, of the Petrashevsky group (to which Dostoyevsky had belonged in his youth), crushed by the government in 1849, than to the great imaginative constructions of Herzen, Bakunin and their followers.

A new generation had grown up during the dead years after 1849. These young men had witnessed vacillation and outright betrayals on the part of liberals which had led to the victories of the reactionary parties in 1849. Twelve years later they saw the same phenomenon in their own country when the manner in which the peasants had been emancipated in Russia seemed to them to be a cynical travesty of all their plans and hopes. Such men as these found the plodding genius of Chernyshevsky, his attempts to work out specific solutions to specific problems in terms of concrete statistical data; his constant appeals to facts; his patient efforts to indicate attainable, practical, immediate ends rather than desirable states of affairs to which there was no visible road; his flat, dry, pedestrian style, his very dullness and lack of inspiration, more serious and ultimately more inspiring, than the noble flights of the romantic idealists of the 'forties. His relatively low social origin (he was the son of a parish priest) gave him a natural affinity with the humble folk whose condition he was seeking to analyse, and an abiding distrust, later to turn into fanatical hatred, of all liberal theorists, whether in Russia or the West. These qualities made Chernyshevsky a natural leader of a disenchanted generation of socially-mingled origins, no longer dominated by good birth, embittered by the failure of their own early ideals, by government repression, by the humiliation of Russia in the Crimean War, by the weakness, heartlessness, hypocrisy, and chaotic incompetence of the ruling class. To these tough-minded, socially insecure, angry, suspicious young radicals, contemptuous of the slightest trace of eloquence or "literature", Chernyshevsky was a father and a confessor as neither the aristocratic and ironical Herzen nor the wayward and ultimately frivolous Bakunin could ever become.

Like all Populists, Chernyshevsky believed in the need to preserve the peasant commune and to spread its principles to industrial production. He believed that Russia could profit directly by learning from the scientific advances of the West, without going through the agonies of an industrial revolution. "Human development is a form of chronological unfairness," Herzen had once characteristically observed, "since late-comers are able to profit by the labours of their predecessors without paying the same price." "History is fond of her grandchildren," Chernyshevsky repeated after him, "for it offers them the marrow of the bones, which the previous generation had hurt its hands in breaking." For

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Chernyshevsky history moved along a spiral, in Hegelian triads, since every generation tends to repeat the experience not of its parents, but of its grandparents, and repeats it at a "higher level." But it is not this historicist element in his doctrine that bound its spell upon the Populists. They were most of all influenced by his acute distrust of reforms from above, by his belief that the essence of history was a struggle between the classes, above all by his conviction (which derives nothing, so far as we know, from Marx, but draws upon socialist sources common to both) that the state is always the instrument of the dominant class, and cannot, whether it consciously desires this or not, embark on those necessary reforms, the success of which would end its own domination. No order can be persuaded to undertake its own dissolution. Hence all attempts to convert the Tsar, all attempts to evade the horrors of revolution, must (he concluded in the early 'sixties) remain necessarily vain. There was a moment in the late 'fifties when, like Herzen, he had hoped for reforms from above. The final form of the Emancipation, and the concessions which the government had made to the landowners, cured him of this illusion. He pointed out with a good deal of historical justification that liberals, who hoped to influence the government by Fabian tactics, thus far merely succeeded in betraying both the peasants and themselves: first they compromised themselves with the peasants by their relations with their masters; after that, the governing class found little difficulty whenever this suited their convenience in representing them as false friends to the peasants, and turning the latter against them. This had occurred in both France and Germany in 1849. Even if the moderates withdrew in time, and advocated violent measures, their ignorance of conditions and blindness to the peasants' and workers' actual needs usually led them to advocate utopian schemes which in the end cost their followers a terrible price.

CHERNYSHEVSKY had evolved a simple form of historical materialism, according to which social factors determined political ones, and not *vice versa*. Consequently, he held with Fourier and Proudhon that liberal and parliamentary ideals merely evaded the central issues: the peasants and the workers needed food, shelter, boots; as for the right to vote, or to be governed by liberal constitutions, or to obtain guarantees of personal liberty, these meant little to hungry and half-naked men. The social revolution must come first: appropriate political reforms would follow of themselves. For Chernyshevsky the principal lesson of 1848 was that the Western liberals, the brave no less than the cowardly, had demonstrated their political and moral bankruptcy, and with it that of their Russian disciples—Herzen, Kavelin, Granovsky, and the rest. Russia must pursue her own path. Unlike the Slavophils, and like the Russian Marxists of the next generation, he maintained with a wealth of economic evidence that the historical development of Russia, and in particular the peasant *mir*, were in no sense unique, but followed the social and economic laws that governed all human societies. Like the Marxists (and the Comtian positivists), he believed that such laws could be discovered and stated; but unlike the Marxists, he was convinced that by adopting Western techniques, and educating a body of men of trained and resolute wills and rational outlook, Russia could "leap over" the capitalist stage of social development, and transform her village communes and free co-operative groups of craftsmen into agricultural and industrial associations of producers who would constitute the embryo of the new socialist society. Technological progress did not, in his view, automatically break up the peasant commune: "savages can be taught to use Latin script and safety-matches"; factories can be grafted on to workers' *artels* without destroying them; large-scale organisation could eliminate exploitation, and yet preserve the predominantly agricultural nature of the Russian economy.*

Chernyshevsky believed in the decisive historical rôle of the application of science to life, but, unlike Pisarev, did not regard individual

* Professor Franco Venturi very aptly quotes Populist statistics (which seem plausible enough) according to which the number of peasants to that of landowners in the 'sixties was of the order of 341:1, while the land owned by them stood to that of their masters in the ratio of 1:112, and their incomes were 2·5:97·5; as for industry, the proportion of city workers to peasants was 1:100. Given these figures, it is perhaps not surprising that Marx should have declared that his prognosis applied to the Western economies, and not necessarily to that of the Russians, even though his Russian disciples ignored this concession, and insisted that capitalism was making enormous strides in Russia, and would soon obliterate the differences that divided it from the West. Plekhanov (who stoutly denied that Chernyshevsky had ever been a Populist) elaborated this theory, and Lenin acted upon it, with results that need no elaboration.

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enterprise, still less capitalism, as indispensable to this process. He retained enough of the Fourierism of his youth to look upon the free associations of peasant communes and craftsmen's *artels* as the basis of all freedom and progress. But at the same time, like the Saint-Simonians, he was convinced that little would be achieved without collective action/state socialism on a vast scale. These incompatible beliefs were never reconciled; Chernyshevsky's writings contain statements both in favour of and against the desirability of large-scale industry. He is similarly ambivalent about the part to be played (and the part to be avoided) by the state as the stimulator and controller of industry, about the function of managers of large collective industrial enterprises, about the relations of the public and private sectors of the economy, and about the political sovereignty of the democratically elected parliament and its relation to the state as the source of centralised economic planning and control.

What is to be done?

THE outlines of Chernyshevsky's social programme remained vague or inconsistent, and often both. It is the concrete detail which, founded as it was on real experience, spoke directly to the representatives of the great popular masses, who had at last found a spokesman and interpreter of their own needs and feelings. His deepest aspirations and emotions were poured into *What is to be done?*, a social utopia which, grotesque as a work of art, had a literally epoch-making effect on Russian opinion. This didactic novel described the "new men" of the free, morally pure, co-operative socialist commonwealth of the future; its touching sincerity and moral passion bound their spell upon the imaginations of the idealistic and guilt-stricken sons of prosperous parents, and provided them with an ideal model in the light of which an entire generation of revolutionaries educated and hardened itself to the defiance of existing laws and conventions, and to the acceptance of exile and death with sublime unconcern. Chernyshevsky preached a naïve utilitarianism. Like James Mill, and perhaps Bentham, he held that basic human nature was a fixed, physiologically analysable, pattern of natural processes and faculties, and that the maximisation of human happiness could therefore be scientifically planned and realised. Having decided that imaginative writing and criticism were the only available *media* in Russia for propagating radical ideas, he filled the *Contemporary*, a review which he edited together with the poet Nekrasov, with as high a proportion of direct socialist doctrine as could be smuggled in under the guise of literature. In his work he was helped by the violent young critic Dobrolyubov, a genuinely gifted man of letters (which Chernyshevsky was not) who, at times, went even further in his passionate desire to preach and educate. The æsthetic views of the two zealots were severely practical. Chernyshevsky laid it down that the function of art was to help men to satisfy their wants more rationally, to disseminate knowledge, to combat ignorance, prejudice, and the anti-social passions, to improve life in the most literal and narrow sense of these words. Driven to absurd consequences, he embraced them gladly. Thus he explained that the chief value of marine paintings was that they showed the sea to those who, like, for instance, the inhabitants of central Russia, lived too far away from it ever to see it for themselves; or that his friend and patron Nekrasov, because by his verse he moved men to greater sympathy with the oppressed than other poets had done, was for this reason the greatest Russian poet, living or dead. His earlier collaborators, civilised and fastidious men of letters like Turgenev and Botkin, found this grim fanaticism increasingly difficult to bear. Turgenev could not long live with this art-hating and dogmatic schoolmaster. Tolstoy despised his dreary provincialism, his total lack of æsthetic sense, his intolerance, his rationalism, his maddening self-assurance. But these very qualities, or, rather, the outlook of which they were characteristic, helped to make him the natural leader of the "hard" young men who had succeeded the idealists of the 'forties. Chernyshevsky's harsh, flat, dull, humourless, grating sentences, his preoccupation with concrete detail, his self-discipline, his dedication to the material and moral good of his fellow-men, the grey, self-effacing personality, the tireless, passionate, devoted, minute industry, the hatred of style or of any concessions to the graces, the unquestionable sincerity, utter self-forgetfulness, brutal directness, indifference to the claims of private life, innocence, personal kindness, pedantry, disarming moral charm, capacity for self-sacrifice, created the image that later became the prototype of the Russian revolutionary hero and martyr. More than any other publicist he was responsible for drawing the final line between "us" and "them." All his life he

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preached that there must be no compromise with "them," that the war must be fought to the death and on every front; that there were no neutrals; that, so long as this war was being fought, no work could be too trivial, too repulsive, or too tedious for a revolutionary to perform. His personality and outlook set its seal upon two generations of Russian revolutionaries; not least upon Lenin, who admired him devotedly.

In spite of his emphasis on economic or sociological arguments, the basic approach, the tone and outlook of Chernyshevsky and of the Populists generally, is moral, and at times religious. These men believed in socialism not because it was inevitable, nor because it was effective, not even because it alone was rational, but because it was just. Concentrations of political power, capitalism, the centralised state, trampled on the rights of men and crippled them morally and spiritually. The Populists were stern atheists, but socialism and orthodox Christian values coalesced in their minds. They shrank from the prospect of industrialism in Russia because of its brutal cost, and they disliked the West because it had paid this price too heartlessly. Their disciples, the Populist economists of the 'eighties and 'nineties, Danielson and Vorontsov, for example, for all their strictly economic arguments about the possibility of capitalism in Russia (some of which seem a good deal sounder than their Marxist opponents have represented them as being), were in the last analysis moved by moral revulsion from the sheer mass of suffering that capitalism was destined to bring, that is to say, by a refusal to pay so appalling a price, no matter how valuable the results. Their successors in the 20th century, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, sounded the note which runs through the whole of the Populist tradition in Russia: that the purpose of social action is not the power of the state, but the welfare of the people; that to enrich the state and provide it with military and industrial power, while undermining the health, the education, the morality, the general cultural level of its citizens, was feasible but wicked. They compared the progress of the United States, where, they maintained, the welfare of the individual was paramount, with that of Prussia, where it was not. They committed themselves to the view (which goes back at least to Sismondi) that the spiritual and physical condition of the individual citizen matters more than the power of the state, so that if, as often happened, the two stood in inverse ratio to one another, the rights and welfare of the individual must come first. They rejected as historically false the proposition that only powerful states could breed good or happy citizens, and as morally unacceptable the proposition that to lose one in the life and welfare of his society is the highest form of individual self-fulfilment. Belief in the primacy of human rights over other claims is the first principle that separates pluralist from centralised societies, welfare states, mixed economies, "New Deal" policies, on the one hand from one-party governments, "closed" societies, "five-year plans," and, in general, forms of life built to serve a single goal that transcends the varied goals of differing groups or individuals. Chernyshevsky was more fanatical than most of his followers in the 'seventies and 'eighties, and believed far more strongly in organisation, but even he neither stopped his ears to the cries for immediate help which he heard upon all sides, nor believed in the need to suppress the wants of individuals who were making desperate efforts to escape destruction, in the interests of even the most sacred and overmastering purpose. There were times when he was a narrow and unimaginative pedant, but at his worst he was never impatient, nor arrogant, nor inhumane, and was perpetually reminding his readers and himself that in their zeal to help the educators must not end by bullying their would-be beneficiaries, that what "we"—the rational intellectuals—think good for the peasants may be not what they themselves want or need, and that to ram "our" remedies down "their" throats is not permitted. Neither he nor Lavrov, nor even the most ruthlessly Jacobin among the proponents of terror and violence, ever took cover behind the inevitable direction of history as a justification of what would otherwise have been patently unjust or brutal. If violence was the only means to a given end, then there might be circumstances in which it was right to employ it; but this must be justified in each case by the intrinsic moral claim of the end—an increase in happiness, or solidarity, or justice, or peace, or some other universal human value that outweighs the evil of the means, never by the view that it was rational and necessary to march in step with history ignoring one's scruples and dismissing one's own "subjective" moral principles because they were necessarily provisional, on the ground that history herself transformed all moral systems and retrospectively justified only those principles which survived and succeeded.

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THE mood of the Populists, particularly in the 'seventies, can fairly be described as religious. This group of conspirators or propagandists saw itself, and was seen by others, as constituting a dedicated order. The first condition of membership was the sacrifice of one's entire life to the movement, both to the particular group and party, and to the cause of the revolution in general. But the notion of the dictatorship of the party or of its leaders over individual lives—in particular over the beliefs of individual revolutionaries—is not part of this doctrine, and is indeed contrary to its entire spirit. The only censor over the individual's acts is his individual conscience. If one has promised obedience to the leaders of the party, such an oath is sacred, but it extends only to the specific revolutionary objectives of the party and not beyond them, and ends with the completion of whatever specific goals the party exists to promote—in the last resort, the revolution. Once the revolution has been made, each individual is free to act as he thinks fit, since discipline is a temporary means and not an end. The Populists did indeed virtually invent the conception of the party as a group of professional conspirators with no private lives, obeying a total discipline—the core of the "hard" professionals as against mere sympathisers and fellow-travellers; but this sprang from the specific situation that obtained in Tsarist Russia, and the necessity and conditions for effective conspiracy, and not from belief in hierarchy as a form of life desirable or even tolerable in itself. Nor did the conspirators justify their acts by appealing to a cosmic process which sanctified their every act, since they believed in freedom of human choice and not in determinism. The later Leninist conception of the revolutionary party and its dictatorship, although historically it owed much to these trained martyrs of an earlier day, sprang from a very different outlook. The young men who poured into the villages during the celebrated summer of 1874 only to meet with non-comprehension, suspicion, and often outright hostility on the part of the peasants, would have been profoundly astonished and indignant if they had been told that they were to look upon themselves as the sacred instruments of history, and that their acts were therefore to be judged by a moral code different from that common to other men.

The Populist movement was a failure. "Socialism bounced off people like peas from a wall," wrote the celebrated terrorist Stepnyak Kravchinsky to his fellow-revolutionary Vera Zassulich in 1876, two years after the original wave of enthusiasm had died down. "They listen to our people as they do to the priest"—respectfully, without understanding, without any effect upon their actions.

> *There is noise in the capitals*
> *The prophets thunder*
> *A furious war of words is waged*
> *But in the depths, in the heart of Russia,*
> *There all is still, there is ancient peace.*

These lines by Nekrasov convey the mood of frustration which followed the failure of the sporadic efforts made by the revolutionary idealists in the late 'sixties and early 'seventies, peaceful propagandists and isolated terrorists alike—of whom Dostoyevsky painted so violent a picture in his novel *The Possessed*. The government caught these men, exiled them, imprisoned them, and by its obstinate unwillingness to promote any measures to alleviate the consequences of an inadequate land reform drove liberal opinion towards sympathy with the revolutionaries. They felt that public opinion was on their side, and finally resorted to organised terrorism. Yet their ends always remained moderate enough. The open letter which they addressed to the new Emperor in 1881 is mild and liberal in tone. "Terror," said the celebrated revolutionary Vera Figner many years later, "was intended to create opportunities for developing the faculties of men for service to society." The society for which violence was to blast the way was to be peaceful, tolerant, decentralised, and humane. The principal enemy was still the state.

Terrorism

THE wave of terrorism reached its climax with the assassination of Alexander II in 1881. The hoped-for revolution did not break out. The revolutionary organisations were crushed, and the new Tsar decided upon a policy of extreme repression. In this he was, on the whole, supported by public opinion, which recoiled before the assassination of an Emperor who had, after all, emancipated the peasants, and was said to have been meditating other liberal measures. The most prominent leaders of the movement were executed or exiled; lesser figures escaped abroad, and the most gifted of those who were still free—Plekhanov and Akselrod—gradually moved towards Marxism.

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They felt embarrassed by Marx's own concession that Russia could in principle avoid passing through a capitalist stage even without the aid of a Communist world revolution—a thesis which Engels conceded far more grudgingly and with qualifications—and maintained that Russia had in fact already entered the capitalist stage. They declared that since the development of capitalism in Russia was no more avoidable than it had been in its day in the West, nothing was to be gained by averting one's face from the "iron" logic of history, and that for these reasons, so far from resisting industrialisation, socialists should encourage it, indeed profit by the fact that it, and it alone, could breed the army of revolutionaries which would be sufficient to overthrow the capitalist enemy—an army to be formed out of the growing city proletariat, organised and disciplined by the very conditions of its labour.

The vast leap forward in industrial development made by Russia in the 'nineties seemed to support the Marxist thesis. It proved attractive to revolutionary intellectuals for many reasons: because it claimed to be founded on a scientific analysis of the laws of history which no society could hope to evade; because it claimed to be able to prove that, although, as the pattern of history inexorably unfolded itself, much violence, misery, and injustice were bound to occur, yet the story would have a happy ending. Hence the conscience of those who felt guilty because they acquiesced in exploitation and poverty, or at any rate because they did not take active—that is, violent—steps to alleviate or prevent them, as Populist policy had demanded, felt assuaged by the "scientific" guarantee that the road, covered though it might be with the corpses of the innocent, led inevitably to the gates of an earthly paradise. According to this view, the expropriators would find themselves expropriated by the sheer logic of human development, although the course of history might be shortened, and the birth-pangs made easier, by conscious organisation, and above all an increase in knowledge (that is, education) on the part of the workers and their leaders. This was particularly welcome to those who, understandably reluctant to continue with useless terrorism which merely led to Siberia or the scaffold, now found doctrinal justification for peaceful study and the life of ideas, which the intellectuals among them found far more congenial than bomb-throwing.

The heroism, the disinterestedness, the personal nobility of the Populists were often admitted by their Marxist opponents. They were regarded as worthy forerunners of a truly rational revolutionary party, and Chernyshevsky was sometimes accorded an even higher status and was credited with insights of genius—an empirical and unscientific, but instinctively correct, approach to truths of which only Marx and Engels could provide the demonstration, armed as they were with the instrument of an exact science to which neither Chernyshevsky, nor any other Russian thinker of his day, had yet attained. Marx and Engels grew to be particularly indulgent to the Russians: they were praised for having done wonders for amateurs, remote from the West and using home-made tools. They alone in Europe had, by 1880, created a truly revolutionary situation in their country; nevertheless it was made clear, particularly by Kautsky, that this was no substitute for professional methods and the use of the new machinery provided by scientific socialism. Populism was written down as an amalgam of unorganised moral indignation and utopian ideas in the muddled heads of self-taught peasants, well-meaning university intellectuals and other social casualties of the confused interim between the end of an obsolescent feudalism and the beginning of the new capitalist phase in a backward country. Marxist historians still tend to describe it as a movement compounded of systematic misinterpretation of economic facts and social realities, noble but useless individual terrorism, and spontaneous or ill-directed peasant risings—the necessary but pathetic beginnings of real revolutionary activity, the prelude to the real play, a scene of naïve ideas and frustrated practice destined to be swept away by the new revolutionary, dialectical science heralded by Plekhanov and Lenin.

WHAT were the ends of Populism? Violent disputes took place about means and methods, about timing, but not about ultimate purposes. Anarchism, equality, a full life for all, these were universally accepted. It is as if the entire movement—the motley variety of revolutionary types which Professor Venturi describes so well and so lovingly—Jacobins and moderates, terrorists and educators, Lavrists and Bakuninists, "troglodytes," "recalcitrants," "country folk," members of "Land and Liberty" and of "The People's Will," were all dominated by a single myth: that once the monster was slain, the sleeping princess—the Russian peasantry—would

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awaken without further ado and live happily forever after.

This is the movement of which Professor Venturi has written the history, the fullest, clearest, best-written and most impartial account of a particular stage of the Russian revolutionary movement in any language. Yet if the movement was a failure, if it was founded on false premises and was so easily extinguished by the Tsarist police, has it a more than historical interest—that of a narrative of the life and death of a party, of its acts and its ideas? On this Professor Venturi discreetly, as behoves an objective historian, offers no direct opinion. He tells the story in chronological sequence; he explains what occurs; he describes origins and consequences; he illuminates the relations of various groups of Populists to one another, and leaves moral and political speculation to others. His work is not an apologia either for Populism or its opponents. He does not praise or condemn, and seeks only to understand. Success in this task plainly needs no further reward. And yet one may, at moments, wonder whether Populism should be dismissed quite as easily as it still is to-day, both by Communist and bourgeois historians. Were the Populists so hopelessly in error? Were Chernyshevsky and Lavrov—and Marx who listened to them—totally deluded?

Was capitalism, in fact, inevitable in Russia? The consequences of accelerated industrialisation prophesied by the neo-populist economists in the 'nineties, namely a degree of social and economic misery as great as any undergone in the West during the Industrial Revolution, did occur, both before, and, at an increasing tempo, after the October Revolution. Were they avoidable? Some writers on history consider this type of question to be absurd as such. What happened, happened. We are told that if we are not to deny causality in human affairs, we must suppose that what took place can only have done so precisely as it did; to ask what might have happened if the situation had been different, is the idle play of the imagination, not worthy of serious historians. Yet this academic question is not without acute contemporary relevance. Some countries, such as, for example, Yugoslavia, Turkey, India, and some states in the Middle East and Latin America, have adopted a slower tempo of industrialisation and one less likely to bring immediate ruin to backward areas before they can be rehabilitated, and have done so in conscious preference to the forced marches of collectivisation upon which, in our day, the Russians, and after them the Chinese, have embarked. Are these non-Marxist governments inescapably set upon a path to ruin? For it is Populist ideas which lie at the base of much of the socialist economic policy pursued by these and other countries to-day.

Jacobin Technique

When Lenin organised the Bolshevik revolution in 1917, the technique that he adopted, *prima facie* at least, resembled those commended by the Russian Jacobins, Tkachev and his followers, who had learnt them from Blanqui or Buonarroti, more than any to be found in the writings of Marx or Engels at any rate after 1851. It was not, after all, full-grown capitalism that was enthroned in Russia in 1917. Russian capitalism was a still growing force, not yet in power, struggling against the fetters imposed upon it by the monarchy and the bureaucracy, as it had done in 18th-century France. But Lenin acted as if the bankers and industrialists were already in control. He acted and spoke as if this was so, but his revolution succeeded not so much by taking over the centres of finance and industry (which history should already have undermined) but by a seizure of strictly political power on the part of a determined and trained group of professional revolutionaries, precisely as had been advocated by Tkachev. If Russian capitalism had reached the stage which, according to Marxist historical theory, it had to reach before a proletarian revolution could be successful, the seizure of power by a determined minority, and a very small one at that—a mere *Putsch*—could not, *ex hypothesi*, have retained it long. And this, indeed, is what Plekhanov said over and over again in his bitter denunciations of Lenin in 1917: ignoring his argument that much may be permitted in a backward country provided that the results were duly saved by orthodox Marxist revolutions successfully carried out soon after in the industrially more advanced West. These conditions were not fulfilled; Lenin's hypothesis proved historically irrelevant; yet the Bolshevik revolution did not collapse. Could it be that the Marxist theory of history was mistaken? Or had the Mensheviks misunderstood it, and concealed from themselves the anti-democratic tendencies which had always been implicit in it? In which case were their charges against Mikhailovsky and his friends wholly just? By 1917 their own fears of the Bolshevik dictatorship rested upon the same basis. Moreover, the results of the

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October Revolution turned out to be oddly similar to those which Tkachev's opponents had prophesied that his methods must inevitably produce: the emergence of an *élite*, wielding dictatorial power, designed in theory to wither away once the need for it had gone; but, as the Populist democrats had said over and over again, in practice more likely to grow in aggressiveness and strength, with a tendency towards self-perpetuation which no dictatorship seems able to resist. The Populists were convinced that the death of the peasant commune would mean death, or at any rate, a vast setback, to freedom and equality in Russia; the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were their direct descendants, transformed this into a demand for a form of decentralised, democratic self-government among the peasants, which Lenin adopted when he concluded his temporary alliance with them in October, 1917. In due course the Bolsheviks repudiated this programme, and transformed the cells of dedicated revolutionaries—perhaps the most original contribution of Populism to revolutionary practice—into the hierarchy of centralised political power, which the Populists had steadily and fiercely denounced until they were themselves finally, in the form of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, proscribed and annihilated. Communist practice owed much, as Lenin was always ready to admit, to the Populist movement; for it borrowed the technique of its rival and adapted it with conspicuous success to serve the precise purpose which it had been invented to resist.

Ronald Bottrall

The Old Blowing-House

We were together sunk in a fern hollow
Where a bruised engine-house looked sheer
On to the sea, above us granite boulders
Strewn by giants. A sea of beaten copper
Overlooked by storm-clouds ribbed with blood,
My blood and do you remember a drop of it?

The sun shook there in a fretted ripple
And left a skein for your fancy to hold.
Is your hand still on the silken thread?
If you recall the moment does it glow
With gleam of pyrites or are the adits
Of our deep youth grown over? Now
I am alone and breathe an older dark.

Miners with candles at their heads
Probed dripping galleries under the sea
For tin and coughed out their lungs. You freshen
Another air free of the Wolf lighthouse
Spurting as cruelly as a wrecker's flare
In fearful monotonous intervals
Across the bulwark of Castle Kenidjack.

The compass needle trembles inanely
And the weather-cock teeters in the wind
The wind, the pitiless Atlantic gale
Bends dwarf oaks into heaving arches and loosens
A stone from the engine stack that clattering
Rolls down to wound the gathering sea.

After the hurricane comes no clarity.
The pattern has faded like an old quilt
And the curve of the images recedes.
I have lost my land, lying castaway
On sand counted out and outnumbered.

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Herbert Luethy

General de Gaulle

THE first volume (and the first act) was *L'Appel*, and General de Gaulle, quite legitimately, was its only actor, the only creator and the only character of his tale. The man, the style, and the events were in perfect harmony: history for a moment appeared simple and clear, draped to the size of a man who in turn was measured for it. It was like an *image d'Épinal* in its truth and its simple, shining purity. In London, filled with the remnants of armies and rulers in exile, the last capital standing on the edge of a blacked-out Europe, in the BBC's radiophonic Tower of Babel, murmuring with the voices of a threatened Empire and world, using every expedient, all waves beamed, speaking thousands of hours a day in every language to the triumphant enemy, to the stricken allies, to the uneasy Empire, to the sanguine Commonwealth, to America impatiently expected, to Russia wandering in the enemy camp, to the frightened neutrals, to Italy and Japan already on the point of springing to the attack—in short, speaking to the whole world to sow the seeds of courage on the one hand and confusion on the other—this was where a French officer brought to London by General Spears was to give a five-minutes' talk almost impromptu, in turmoil. In that huge broadcasting tower only two or three technicians, whose duty it was to keep a studio free for the time announced, noticed the incident and the unusual figure of that officer bearing the destiny of France on his shoulders; at the time very few listeners, even among those who later came to believe they remembered it, heard that unknown, predestined voice; no one thought to record for posterity that call, apparently thrown out into the void; no tape-recording in the otherwise well-stocked files of the BBC (or in those of the world's monitoring stations) preserves its pitch or accent. It was the solitary action of a lonely man, a call drowned in the noises of catastrophe, which was to be the first date in the annals of *la France libre*, *la France combattante*, *la France libérée*, and even of the Fifth Republic. Apart from the noise and the microphones, we might think of the Nativity in the stable hay, unknown to the authorities and to the public, with only a few shepherds in the fields made aware of it by echoes from the sky. The Kings were to be slow to come and grudging in their offerings.

Volume II (but not Act Two) was *L'Unité*. Already the style becomes broken, and the clear skies darken. "Unity"—that can no longer be the solitary action of a single man; it is everybody's business. A strange title for the tale of the Dakar expedition, the heart-rending Syrian campaign, the "comedy" and "tragedy" of Algiers; and even the far-off realities of occupied France, hardly mentioned in the text (Vichy France, of course, but also *la France résistante*), do not fall easily under this heading. "I create the FFI [*Forces françaises de l'Intérieur*]": certainly we remember the little phrase that put things in their right order, but we also know the clash which always arises between the creator and his creation. And yet, in a deep sense, *L'Unité* remains the assertion of a single man, for by his own will or that of history, it could only be based on himself. France's unity was the unity of its incarnation, and, first of all, in terms of international law, it was the unity of its representation before the world. The great debate, which is at the centre of *L'Unité*, was to impose this unity of representation on the reluctant Allies; all the rest is subsidiary. And this ceaseless struggle, concentrated on this decisive point, was that of national dignity itself. Just because France was under the jack-boot, it could only

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take part in the war and make its voice heard as an incarnate idea, and it could only be incarnate in the loftiest, most majestic, and most exacting figure.

L'Unité is the story of this transfiguration far above the heads of ordinary human beings. Throughout the great cause is defended against Franklin Roosevelt, who plays the part of the devil's advocate, because he is the unbeliever who doubts the reality of France as an incarnate idea, who insists on regarding France as a country which lies between the Rhine and the Pyrenees with forty million inhabitants, and who is prepared to admit without hesitation that this France can be as genuinely represented by less lofty, less dignified, and less exacting figures; in short, asks to see a commission instead of recognising the obvious truth. That is what is unpardonable. Even the dynamic welcome of the crowds of August 1944 do not seem to have convinced this unbeliever; if at last he gave way for form's sake—but that is already in the next volume—he nonetheless died with his sins upon his head. "If he had lived..." no doubt he too would have seen the light. Legitimately, once again, this was the struggle of a solitary crusader in an unbelieving world—a struggle carried on in France's absence and even made possible by that absence, for France regained will never live up to its incarnate idea.

THIS solitude, which is an element of grandeur necessary to *L'Appel* and to the crusading *L'Unité*, becomes nightmarish in the third and last volume which is called *Le Salut* and is a record of salvation unattained. It is a historical narrative still rich in pictures from the master's brush, in scenes carved in marble, but already poorer in "portraits"—with the exception of the titanic sketches of Hitler, Stalin, and Churchill—and with grey, colourless, long-drawn-out passages which are not due to a failure in style. With the government of men has come the boredom of petty material tasks, food supplies, wages, prices, currency reform, budgets, which use up energy worthier of higher things and with which clearly neither the writer nor the statesman feels himself at home. Then there is the tiresome daily routine of a *chef d'État*, under which de Gaulle groans. But the background of the story is the Liberator's confrontation with the country he has freed, a country little by little re-possessed by its demons and worthy neither of its idea nor of its incarnation. It is a long monologue, poignant and melancholy, of the *monarque paternel et solitaire* who shows his country the path of salvation, greatness, and fame and who is neither heard nor understood.

> As for myself, only too well aware of my limitations and my failings, certain that no man can substitute himself for a people, how I longed to implant in every Frenchman the same convictions that inspired me!

Throughout the book until the retirement to the desert the same scene returns pathetically, often repeated and described each time in the most minute and lyrical detail: the offering, the gift made to France, in the course of demonstrations and processions, General de Gaulle appearing to the people, plunging into the crowd, shaking hands and stretching out his arms, so that the truth of his commission may strike even the blindest eyes, so that the apparent sign of destiny may come down upon him, so that they may touch, see, and believe. Marches, ceremonies, and public celebrations take place endlessly—May 8th, May 13th, June 18th, July 14th—and also official visits from province to province, from town to town. In the summer of 1945, with the war over, political stocktaking approaches: "Consequently I hastened the demonstrations." And,

> as always at such ceremonies, I left the official cortège now and then in order to approach the crowd and join its ranks. Shaking hands, listening to cheers, I tried to make this contact into an exchange. "Here I am as God made me!" is what I tried to communicate to those around me. "As you see, I am your brother, at home among the members of his family, but also a leader who cannot compromise with duty nor bend under his burden."

Each time the communion seems to be attained, a common thrill runs through the crowd, who continue to shout de Gaulle "with such cheers that after hearing them I had no further doubts and no half-heartedness."

> Among the delighted soldiers, the people weeping for joy, and de Gaulle standing at the head of the ceremony passed that magical current activated by great and mutual emotion.

Was it only illusion? Did his voice, like his stature, pass over the heads of those honest folk who shouted and frantically applauded the moving scene? Listening to the country, General de Gaulle thought he still heard softly, indistinctly, like the rumination of cattle scattered over the fields, the murmur of widespread approval; but, above this soothing music, all the

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more distinguishable and articulate voices in France were showing signs of impatience and uneasiness towards their protective father-figure:

> Having made my appeal, I listened for the answering echoes. The murmurs of the multitude remained enthusiastic but confused. Perhaps the voices that were making themselves heard in the forum, from the tribunal of assemblies, the pulpit and in faculties and academies would support my own? . . . I listened, but only to hear the scuffles of their circumspection. Yet what were these peremptory and conflicting cries that now resounded so noisily throughout the nation? Alas, nothing but the clamour of partisans.

PARTISANS of what? Of whom? It is taken for granted that de Gaulle could not have partisans, since he is unity itself, and that he despises partisans, beginning with his own. But, between the diffused rumination of the multitude, and the solitary thought of the leader, was there then nothing around him? something better than a party, a team, a few faithful followers? nobody? It is here that the solitude becomes stifling. No doubt, the formal style increases the impression of isolation. We learned at school that Louis XI broke the barons, that Louis XIV built factories, founded trading companies, and carried on a great number of wars, just as Rameses built his pyramid. Louis XIV at least had Colbert. Charles de Gaulle had nobody. The famous remark *"je crée les FFI"* recurs on every page and in surprising contexts, when it is a question of economic measures, of nationalisation, of "structural reforms," of social legislation: not a name, not a reference allows us to suspect that the least detail of this rather scattered whole might come from some other source than the congruous thought of General de Gaulle:

> The future was ours to build. To do so, we must have a policy. I attempted to make mine equal to the demands and dimensions of the subject. . . . To guide the country towards economic and financial equilibrium . . . to govern by bold and arduous efforts, and despite all disadvantages. This was my programme. . . . Unless de Gaulle took the initiative, carried out a number of reforms by which he could re-group alliances, get support from the workers and ensure economic recovery on a new basis. This was the immediate task on which I set the Government to work. . . . Independently of the spirit of justice and opportunity, it was this same motive that led me to promote our workers to the rank of responsible associates. . . .

It is fair enough and consistent with his theory of the state that General de Gaulle should take upon himself unreservedly the actions of his Government; perhaps he takes them upon himself only too much. Nothing can surpass in icy disdain the remarks he makes here and there about his Ministers—incidentally, like a few casual words spoken at the beginning of a Cabinet session, polite meaningless words of the kind used by monarchs (*Ces mots de souverain!* Ambassadors and heads of foreign states receive them too and see them preserved for posterity. The Canadian Prime Minister, Mackenzie King, having tactfully explained to his famous visitor that Canada had a great deal of friendship for France, but three thousand miles of frontier with the U.S.A., was perhaps a little surprised to hear himself answered: "What you have just said convinces me that France was quite right in coming here long ago and planting the seed of civilisation."). One Minister "skilfully applies himself," another "struggles valiantly," another "devotes himself," another "does his best" to carry out the directives from above. As for René Pleven, the victor of the only clash of principles which de Gaulle had to decide within his Cabinet, here is how he is described—and probably there is no need to seek elsewhere the reasons for the judgment given in his favour:

> A long-standing colleague of broad and brilliant mind, though invariably modest, a *commis* equal to the complex tasks which his flexible intellect readily encompassed. . . . Although occasionally I thought his complications superfluous and his flexibility excessive, I gave him my entire confidence and unceasingly supported him.

A *commis* certainly in the lofty sense of the *ancien regime*, but a *commis* all the same. And here is what will be the sole clause of a future constitution: "As a Cabinet member each was responsible to General de Gaulle and to him alone."

What does it matter in the end who they are? When you are de Gaulle you govern with anyone.

IT HAS been noticed that the only two Ministers of whom de Gaulle speaks with a kind of respect are Pierre Mendès-France and Maurice Thorez. De Gaulle makes the fine and generous gesture of publishing in full (among the documents attached to this volume), Mendès-France's letter of resignation, whose warnings against the facile monetary policy into which the Government was slipping were to come so true. Because he took a clear line, and then refused to be responsible for a policy he dis-

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approved, Mendès-France retained the General's esteem mingled with some surprise that anyone could take monetary matters so seriously; but nothing shows that de Gaulle, in writing his *Memoirs*, has understood the scope of the dispute any better than at the moment he decided it, or the irreversibility of that decision once taken. The loans, the conversions of gilt-edged stock, the issue of State bonds in a steady stream—this policy of half-measures was not likely to drain the monetary morass: "But," says the good *commis*, "thanks to the nation's confidence in de Gaulle, it will lead to recovery.... Why throw the nation into dangerous convulsions, if it would recover its health sooner or later in any case?" Did Mendès only lack faith in the monetary virtues of the thaumaturgic king of economics? It was rather that, in a somewhat technical, tiresome, and (to him) unattractive field, and since a single man, however great he may be, cannot do everything or be an expert in everything, de Gaulle chose the most flexible and the least demanding Minister in order to leave his mind free for higher things. His economic thought, in profound agreement with his historical thought, is genuinely that (by no means outdated) of the *Grand Siècle* and the great Colbert: industrial power is subordinated to military power, a large population is necessary for a great empire, while the State directs work and resources for *l'intérêt supérieur de la France*—"France's higher interests—which is something quite different from the immediate advantage of the French population." It is in this field that Maurice Thorez was the State's best and most efficacious servant, since he made the miners and steel-workers roll up their sleeves and thus assists the production of guns and tanks.

> Was this out of patriotism or political opportunism? It was not my job to unravel his motives. It sufficed that France was served.

Among all the aspects of the Liberation Government it is this mystique of economic and social revival, of production and re-population, which has succeeded best in putting itself across. But it is also the least "gaullist" aspect and one in which nobody thought of seeing the basic preoccupation or the personal action of General de Gaulle. His way of talking economics showed well enough that something else was at stake. "Standard of living and reconstruction"—these are the ambitions which he allots pityingly to a ruined Germany, not to a victorious France. "The power of France! This, henceforth, is our great cause!" he cried on the eve of his departure for Moscow in a programmatic speech to the Assembly; and from page to page follow variations on this same theme: *le grandeur, le rang, l'ambition nationale, paraître*.... There, too, is a misunderstanding between de Gaulle and a France which was getting down to work, a misunderstanding which he discovers first in the "politicians":

> Once again I remarked that if the goal was perhaps the same for them as for myself, the motives guiding them were not identical with my own.... I saw that they were scarcely aware of the motives inspiring me, which was the power of France.

What is at stake is the part to be played by France and its rank in the world, nothing else, and his contemporaries have always seen de Gaulle distant and turned towards the mountain-tops of the vast destinies of worlds and empires. And, according to his *Memoirs*, it was there that the "politicians," the "élite," but also the ruminant country itself abandoned him on the road to greatness without having understood his design: all the rest of his political trials are incidental compared to this fundamental lack of understanding.

It is true that, even to-day, even in retrospect, this *politique mondiale de grandeur* which was his and which was not understood, remains extraordinarily misty. As is the case for his conception of the State—that "State which must be a State and whose leader must be a leader" and whose content has not yet been elucidated, fifteen years later, by a long and explicit Constitution and a Republic made-to-measure—as is the case also for the imperial formulæ which are sketched here and there in these *Memoirs* under cryptogrammatic or oracular disguise, General de Gaulle's utterances on international politics have that clarity of the obvious which becomes obscure as soon as we try to define them; and the "politicians" the "élite"—all those discordant voices which destroy the harmony—are those who have the impudence to ask for definitions. Greatness, Rank, Power, these are clear, aren't they? And yet what idea of its rôle and its greatness did the France of General de Gaulle bring to the world in 1944–45?

Vast ideas and mediocre ideas, cloudy ideas and contradictory ideas, which the *Memoirs* develop or sketch in turn as if they were so

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many facets of the same whole. There are the great visions, too great to be defined, like that grandiose "plan" indicated at the beginning of the chapter *"Le Rang,"* which was precisely intended to allow France to "undertake great actions, assume great proportions, and greatly serve her own interest and that of the human race as well": nothing less than final peace in Europe "by an association among Slavs, Germans, Gauls, and Latins . . . established in the form of an association including its peoples from Iceland to Istanbul, from Gibraltar to the Urals. . . ." This is the Europe without boundaries which is that of rather old-fashioned textbooks of geography, and which, as a political concept, has only one fault: that of drawing its

Inimitable

As was to be expected, it was Stalin and de Gaulle who said and did the most important things at these meetings [Moscow, December, 1944]. From Stalin's attitude to every subject we discussed, I got the impression that I was face to face with the astute and implacable champion of a Russia exhausted by suffering and tyranny but afire with national ambition.

Stalin was possessed by the will to power. After a lifetime of machinations he was used to disguising his features as well as his inmost soul, to dispensing with illusions, pity, or sincerity, and to see in each man an obstacle or a threat. He was all strategy, suspicion, and stubbornness. The revolution, the party, the state, and the war had given him the opportunity and the means of domination. He had seized them, using a thorough knowledge of the complexities of Marxist dialectic and totalitarian rigour, bringing to bear a superhuman boldness and guilt and by subjugating or liquidating all others.

Thenceforth, with all Russia in his hands alone, Stalin regarded his country as more mysterious, mightier, and more durable than any theory or any régime. He loved it, in his way. Russia herself accepted him as a czar during a terrible epoch and tolerated Bolshevism to turn it to her own advantage, as a weapon. To unite the Slavs, to overcome the Germans, to expand in Asia, to gain access to ice-free seas —these were the dreams of Mother Russia, these were the despot's goals. Two conditions were essential to their realisation: to make Russia into a great modern, that is to say industrial, power, and at the right moment to bring her into a world conflict. The first has been fulfilled, at the price of an unprecedented expenditure of human suffering and human loss. Stalin, when I saw him, was accomplishing the second in the midst of graves and rubble. It was his good luck to have found a people so vital and so patient that the worst slavery did not paralyse them, a soil full of such resources that the most terrible destruction and waste could not exhaust it, and allies without whom he could not have conquered his adversary but who would not have triumphed without him.

During the fifteen-odd hours which made up the sum of my interviews with Stalin, I saw the outlines of his ambitious and cryptic policy. As a Communist disguised as a Marshal, a dictator preferring the tactics of guile, a conqueror with an affable smile, he was a past master of deception. But so fierce was his passion that it often gleamed through this armour, and gave him a certain sinister charm. . . .

At times, he seemed relaxed, even playful. "It must be very difficult," he told me, "to govern a country like France, where everyone is so restless!"

"Yes," I answered. "And I cannot imitate your example, for you are inimitable."

He mentioned Thorez, whom the French Government had allowed to return to Paris. Met by an irritated silence, the Marshal said: "Don't take offence at my indiscretion! Let me only say that I know Thorez and that in my opinion he is a good Frenchman. If I were in your place, I would not put him in prison." He added, with a smile, "At least, not right away!"

"The French Government," I replied, "treats the French according to the services it expects of them." . . .

The Russians tirelessly returned to the deliberations. . . . I was apprehensive lest our team of Ministers be induced to make some distressing concessions. I therefore pretended not to be interested in the council's arguments. Noticing this, Stalin bid even higher: "Ah, these diplomats!" he exclaimed. "What chatterers! There's only one way to shut them up: mow them all down with a machine-gun! Someone get me one!" . . .

Stalin was a good loser. In a low voice, he congratulated me: "You played your hand well! I like dealing with someone who knows what he wants, even if he doesn't share my views." . . .

The farewells, on his part, became effusive. "You can count on me!" he declared. "If you or France need us, we will share what we have with you down to our last crumb!" Suddenly, calling over Podzerov, the Russian interpreter who had attended every meeting and translated every exchange, the Marshal said to him, his expression grim, his voice harsh: "You know too much! I'd better send you to Siberia." I left the room with my Ministers. Turning back at the door, I saw Stalin sitting, alone, at the table. He had started eating again.

GENERAL DE GAULLE, WAR MEMOIRS
(*Weidenfeld & Nicolson*)

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frontiers where no state frontier ever existed. At this rate we cannot stop on the near-side of Kamchatka.

Beside this Europe "binding its three poles: Moscow, London, and Paris," another was born at Brussels where, on October 11th, 1945, de Gaulle went to receive his doctorate *honoris causa*: in the absence of "an eventual association of all the peoples of Europe," there will be "in the immediate present a western grouping having as its arteries the Rhine, the Channel, and the Mediterranean."

Between the two there was the "fine and good alliance" with the Soviet Union, and de Gaulle explains at great length, in relation to his visit to the Kremlin, how France facing the German danger has no natural certain ally except Russia, and why he set aside Churchill's proposal of a triple alliance, since England was too unreliable, too inefficient and, moreover, on bad terms with him, de Gaulle. And he shows Marshal Stalin the whole list of Great Britain's sins, how even in 1914 it "hesitated before entering the war" and only did so "because Belgium was invaded," and, "if it did so in 1939, it was after a series of surrenders," not to mention that "between France and Russia there is no issue directly at stake. With Great Britain we always have had clashes of interest and we shall always have them." There are also (genuinely, despite some surprising anachronisms and historical travesties) the Carolingian accents which are heard at Mainz, where seeing the welcome given de Gaulle "it was as if, after centuries of terrible ordeals the souls of their Gallic and Frankish ancestors lived again in those present"—at Freiburg to "the most enthusiastic cheers": "It was difficult to believe that the Germans had ever entertained anything but this cordiality of which I was being offered such striking proofs towards the Gauls"—lastly, at Strasbourg, where the Rhine is proclaimed "the link of Western Europe."

It is to be noted in passing that the French have become Gauls of the Latins they once thought themselves: is it in order to be more easily incarnate in Charles de Gaulle or to recall the common victory on the Catalaunic Fields? But in this "great design of the French Rhineland" proclaimed at Strasbourg on October 5th, 1945 ("I reached Strasbourg, intending to tell that city the great goal towards which I was leading the French nation, provided it would follow me"), the world could hardly see anything but a variant of those "unalterable claims" on the part of France, which, for their part, were precisely defined and developed in hundreds of pages of memoranda and diplomatic notes, official speeches, and government resolutions: the dismemberment of Germany, the Rhineland under French trusteeship, the Saar joined to France, and systematic obstruction of any attempt at political, administrative, or even economic reorganisation of Germany as a whole.

Lastly, turning a page, we come on a note of irredentism familiar to German and Italian nationalism, but rare in French literature: this country, says General de Gaulle, deposed from its dominant position after 1814, "mutilated of the territories nature intended her to have, grotesquely costumed in artificial frontiers, separated from a third of the population springing from her stock"—Walloon Belgians, French-speaking Swiss, the inhabitants of the Val d'Aosta, and Canadian reinforcements are barely sufficient to reach the desired figure. At least the unjust frontiers of the Maritime Alps were going to be remedied and for the inhabitants of the Val d'Aosta, sprung from the Gauls, the hour of return to the mother country was at last at hand, when the English and Americans, always jealous of French greatness, put a spoke in the wheel of the racial brothers' liberation on the pretext that the war against Italy had ended with the fall of Mussolini; France almost without noticing it lost Vintimiglia, already annexed to the department of the Maritime Alps, and had to leave the liberation committees organised in the Val d'Aosta to their unhappy fate.

Nevertheless in this tragico-grotesque episode of the very last days of the war de Gaulle was able to show "that no one would ignore or defy the will of France," for "while deliberations were proceeding, we created *faits accomplis*," and, since the Allies all the same had no wish to expel the French soldiers by force, "we remained in possession what we wished to have." Indeed, when we think of it, of all those *faits accomplis* carried out on all fronts at that time in the name of French greatness by means of a constant threat of a break with the Allies, one alone was lasting: France was enlarged by the villages of Tenda and Brigue. Europe properly understood begins at home.

THERE is no doubt that in the timeless mind of General de Gaulle all this was arranged *"selon la nature des choses"* around a radiant image of France, a France that scorns neither the inhabitants of Tenda returning to her bosom

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nor the citizens of Mainz suddenly remembering an ancient, transitory French citizenship. (Can we imagine the joyous raptures of the Hanoverians if Major Attlee, unfortunately lacking in historical imagination, had offered them at the time of the collapse re-establishment of the sovereignty of the British crown?) Nor the Sultan of Morocco, that "loyal friend who had shown himself faithful," nor the Africans, nor the Germans, Latins, and Slavs who might wish to group themselves around her, Nor, lastly, a grateful humanity. This was a vision of the world as of a magnetic field, whose elements, according to France's more or less close and forceful attraction exercised upon them, are grouped in different structures "in accordance with the order of human affairs" around this Gaul to make it "one of the three world powers and, should it become necessary, the arbiter between the Soviet and Anglo-American camps." But for the mediocre spirits who could not rise to this world vision and even for the statesmen who, not being able to place themselves in this magnetic field, tried to guess what France's policy was, this was not an ordered whole, and it was not the French Foreign Minister, that agile mind who "surmounted these contradictions by dint of intelligent finesse" who could decode the cryptograms for them. The result, the opposite of magnetism, was that solitary grandeur, the grandeur of a *grande dame* known to be touchy and unpredictable, whose whims we humour, but whom we avoid as much as possible. The result was a fine and useful alliance with Russia which Stalin was to treat as a scrap of paper two months later, a series of conflicts with England and America, an atmosphere of reciprocal obstruction where successes, if there were any, were only successes of *amour-propre*.

In this field, which was already his chosen field, de Gaulle was sovereign; his vast policy, undiscussed, unopposed, misunderstood, did not even have to affront that curiosity for information which is the curse of democracies.

> The press, of course, reported General de Gaulle's speeches and journeys. But the aims the latter proposed gave rise to no campaign, nor even to a commentary, as if what was at stake were beyond the national interest. . . .
>
> To support my policy, that of national ambition, I could count less and less on their voices, their pens, and their influence. . . .

Lastly, the Syrian affair "led me to realise the profound lack of unity which, beneath appearances, separated me from the political parties with regard to foreign affairs"; worse still, "the staff of our diplomatic corps concurred only remotely with the attitude I adopted. . . . Between the impulse I was trying to transmit and the behaviour of those who actually wrote the notes, maintained the contacts, and established the communications, the discrepancy was too apparent to escape our associates . . . ," and this "proof that I no longer held the reins of command could have made the cup run over if, for many other reasons, it were not leaking on all sides already." With growing bitterness de Gaulle measures the difficulty of being so great all alone, great in the name of a herd of recumbent ruminants who never heard the word great.

> Fundamentally, what was, what could be, dictatorship's resource if not great national ambition or the fear of a people imperilled by foreign powers? . . . To-day no conquest, no revenge tempted our citizens; the mass of the people feared neither invasion nor revolution. . . .

That is the final verdict. If it is so, what significance have the "moving tributes" paid to de Gaulle by "the multitude," what significance have the dark lofty words which he continued to let fall now and then from a great height?

At the beginning of the last chapter *"Le Départ,"* de Gaulle once more shows himself in communion with the masses, pronouncing at the foot of the Arc de Triomphe on November 11th stimulating and historic words:

> "Let us walk together," I said, "on the same road, at the same pace, singing the same song! Let us look towards the future with the eyes of a great united people!" Around the circumference of the Place de l'Etoile the crowd was as enthusiastic as ever.

But it was eternal France told to children. How could he make anyone understand *grandeur* who did not feel it? How could he make dwarfs understand the giant's state of mind?

> In the tumult of men and events solitude was my temptation; now it is my friend. What other satisfaction can be sought once you have confronted history? . . . Looking up at the stars, I steep myself in the insignificance of things.

He met History (with a capital H) and learned to despise men who do not know what it is. It is only at his own height that he perceives equals, *les Grands*, those who leave a deep mark on History, the only men who deserve a full-length portrait. He speaks of them with the envy of one who has their scope (and

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more than their scope), but whose means have been pettily restricted by an adverse fate and a pigmy people. Moreover, the climate of the West is not favourable to greatness. Churchill, at the moment when he has to cease to be England's pilot (an event that "has nothing which was not in accordance with the order of human affairs"), deserves a fraternal salutation despite past quarrels, for "this exceptional artist was certainly conscious of the dramatic character of my mission."

But the great anthology piece of *Le Salut* is the visit to Moscow: no one has described as well as de Gaulle the dark spell of a Kremlin banquet, that feast of a Mongol emperor sitting among his vassals, terrible and divine, and brushed that portrait of Stalin, "the astute and implacable champion of a Russia exhausted by suffering and tyranny but afire with national ambition," with "all Russia in his hands alone," which he "loved in his way" and which "accepted him as a Czar" to carry out "the dreams of the fatherland."

> "It must be very difficult," he told me, "to govern a country like France where everyone is so restless!" "Yes," I answered, "and I cannot imitate your example, for you are inimitable."

Less original, but odder because of its Wagnerian *Götterdämmerung* note, related to the unworthiest of literary *genres*, is the obituary portrait of Hitler, this "Prometheus," this "Titan" whom Germany served like a mistress "with greater exertions than any people has ever served any leader." De Gaulle evokes in turn his "lucidity," his "superhuman and inhuman attempt," "the terrible greatness of his conflict and his memory," and he grants him this much: that "conquered and crushed, perhaps he becomes a man again, just long enough for one secret tear at the moment when all is at an end." This sense of greatness is indifferent to human quality.

Equals, perhaps, but not models: General de Gaulle's vocation knows no precedent or standard of comparison. Neither the formula of dictatorship nor that of democracy is applicable to his unique destiny. Churchill left his post, according to "the nature of human affairs," without carrying off with him into retirement legitimacy and England itself; even Stalin did not bear Russia into his tomb with him; all were present, almost humbly, one might say, in a history of their country which had begun before them and would continue after them. None of these great men had come down from Sinai, marked with the sign of fate, for national unity to spring into being at the mere thunder of their name; all of them, with the various means provided by their countries and their political customs, had been heads of parties, involved in struggles and enmities, choosing their supporters and their adversaries: they were great perhaps, solitary perhaps, but not with this nightmarish *grandeur solitaire* transported beyond humanity. No other ruler has pretended to govern innocently, without being involved in "politics," without "playing the game," without mixing with men other than in ceremonies or mystical communion. Unanimity is not a means of government in a democracy and is only one in a dictatorship in the form of terror. This concept of a leader who is an "arbiter above the parties," whose legitimacy comes to him beyond human contingencies and who moulds these to his will, is a strange rationalisation of the rôle of charismatic leadership familiar to primitive man, and whose memory faded with the divine right of kings. On retiring to Colombey in January 1946

> the General took with him something primordial, permanent, and necessary which he incarnated in history.... In the side-tracked leader, men persisted in seeing a kind of capital of sovereignty, a last resort selected in advance. They supposed that such legitimacy could remain latent....

From that monumental assurance stems the staggering and magnificent phrase pronounced fifteen years later, on January 29th, 1960: "... the national legitimacy which I have incarnated for twenty years." Mediæval Germany had those Emperors who retired into a mountain taking the Empire with them, and whose return one day, after a long sleep during which their beards grew through their stone table, would be the Re-birth. But Friedrich Barbarossa never returned. General de Gaulle, who was not asleep, did. Is this book the history of the years 1944–45 or that of the Fifth Republic? At least it is a commentary on its Constitution. And we must pray God that de Gaulle never goes off again into his mountain taking with him legitimacy and France herself.

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R. H. S. Crossman

Palestine Regained

From Weizmann to Bevin and Ben-Gurion

ALTHOUGH it was wound up only eleven years ago, the British Mandate in Palestine is already ancient history—or rather, to be more exact, it belongs to the prehistory of the State of Israel. Those of us who took part in the turbulent politics of that time can see our roles examined by historians who belong to well-established conflicting traditions. For an orthodox British historical interpretation is already emerging which treats the Balfour Declaration as a misguided act of Imperial generosity, bound from the first to end in ruin and disaster. An excellent example of this British view has been presented to us recently by Mr. John Marlowe in his *Seat of Pilate*.* Mr. Marlowe concludes what must be the first complete history of the Mandate with a judgment that falls with equal severity on Lord Balfour and Mr. Bevin.

> One of the hills on which Jerusalem is built is called The Mount of Evil Counsel. The spirit of this hill seems to have brooded over the British adventure in Palestine. At the beginning the attempt to use Zionism as an instrument of British policy was prompted by evil counsel. At the end the attempt to use Arab nationalism as an instrument of British policy was equally prompted by evil counsel. But always this evil counsel, whispered to Balfour in 1917 and to Bevin in 1947, seemed invested with the irresistible cogency conferred by the unconscious obsessions of the men who uttered it. For the British failed in Palestine not as a result of too little imagination on the part of their administrators but as the result of too much imagination on the part of their advisers. The dream of a Levant regenerated by Jewish enterprise was as chimerical as the vision of an Arab Confederation westernised by British "know-how." . . .

* *The Seat of Pilate*. Cresset Press. 30s.

Particularly in the United States and in Israel, another and quite different interpretation of the Mandate is gaining currency. This holds that, so far from being chimerical, the Balfour Declaration was an act of real statesmanship, which was betrayed by successive British Governments and High Commissioners. Britain's pledge to the Jews could have been fulfilled and an independent Israeli State could have developed peacefully out of the National Home if Britain had conducted her Middle Eastern policy on sound lines and carried out the terms of the Mandate without prejudice against the Jews.

Is either of these two versions of history correct?

IN order to find an answer to this question I shall first summarise the case against the administration of the Mandate, which I suspect is rapidly becoming the orthodox version of Israeli prehistory outside Britain. This indictment has four heads: first, that the military administration was violently anti-Jewish; secondly, that the civil administration was composed of colonial officials, many of them from the African colonies and imbued with the philosophy of protecting the native against the "white settler;" thirdly, that the politicians at Westminster were chronically weak; and, fourthly, that the Jews were finally sacrificed in an attempt to appease the Arabs, so that they should not fall under the influence first of the Nazis and Fascists and then, after 1945, of the Soviet Union. There is substance in every charge. But I do not believe that they add up to a proof that the whole project was "chimerical."

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Take, for instance, the criticism of the colonial officials. At the end of that letter to Churchill which he never sent,* Chaim Weizmann, you will remember, insisted on the necessity for purging the administration of "insubordinates who won't carry out the Mandate." What a brilliant phrase! For the story of Palestine from 1921 to 1948 is, indeed, the history of insubordinates who frequently refused to carry the Mandate out. This kind of administrative indiscipline is most unusual in British colonial history. One reason for it, certainly, was the fact that, with the exception of India and the Sudan, which had their own special services, colonial officials were normally moved at short intervals from one colony to another. Between colonies of the same type, this did not matter. In most of our African colonies and dependencies, for example, one of the main tasks of the colonial official was to protect the backward native population against exploitation by more civilised colonists, whether white or Indian. A deeply conscientious official, steeped in this tradition of paternal trusteeship, sometimes found it difficult to adjust himself when he was suddenly transferred from the Gold Coast to Cyprus or from Tanganyika to Palestine, where he had to deal with Cypriot Greeks or Palestinian Jews, who neither were nor felt themselves culturally inferior.

This was impressed upon me some years ago on my first visit to Cyprus, when the present Governor of Nyasaland, Sir Robert Armitage, was still in charge. He was in the true tradition of the Palestine High Commissioners. When I first went to see him, I noticed on his desk a photograph of Dr. Nkrumah, and he said to me, "Nkrumah's an old friend of mine. I was Financial Secretary on the Gold Coast before I came here." A few minutes later we were talking about Cyprus and I said, "Have you any trouble with the Greeks about Enosis?" to which he replied, "If they really wanted it we would have had trouble long ago, such as we had in Palestine." "Isn't it rather dangerous to talk like that?" I enquired. "Oh no, I always talk to them quite straight and tell them that, if only they would follow the example of Nkrumah, they might come as fast as he has towards independence." "But surely," I said, "Nkrumah was gaoled as a Communist and was taken straight out of gaol to become Prime Minister! Is that the example you want the Cypriots to follow?"

From that moment I am afraid that Sir Robert Armitage classified me among the "awkwards," in just the same way as the British officials in Palestine had done when I interrogated them as a member of the Anglo-American Commission. My crime had been to analyse Sir Robert's policies logically, and this was a failing I shared with the Palestine Jews. One of the things which made the officials who administered the Mandate anti-Jewish was the fact that the Jews were logical people, who studied the facts and were not afraid to prove that a British official was talking nonsense. To the average colonial administrator this kind of objectivity was distasteful and he tended to prefer "natives" to people who treated him as an equal and could argue his head off. He found it difficult to be impartial between an Arab, to whom he could feel paternally superior, and a Jew, who made him feel uncomfortable all through the interview.

In the case of the British Army and the Palestine Police, the anti-Jewish bias was stronger and simpler. As Weizmann himself pointed out, when Palestine was first occupied in 1917, nine-tenths of the officers were anti-Zionist and a high proportion of them were anti-semitic as well. Throughout the Mandate the average British soldier and policeman very soon after his arrival in Palestine became pro-Arab and anti-Jew. As for the tiny minority who evinced Zionist convictions, one could usually trace their eccentricity to a female connection—and this was especially true of the Palestine Police. If a soldier or policeman didn't have a Jewish girl, he was nearly always on the side of the "poor old Arab."

It is becoming fashionable—especially among Israelis who claim to be "activists"—to blame Weizmann in particular for tolerating and forgiving this anti-Jewish bias in the British Army and the British colonial service. My comment on this criticism is that, if it was a sin for a Jew to forgive the British, then Weizmann shared the sin with a good many hundred thousand other Israelis. One of the most remarkable experiences of an Englishman who visits Israel to-day is the discovery that the "forgive and forget" attitude, which characterised Weizmann, has now spread to almost the whole population. Reminiscing about the Mandate consumes almost as much time in Israel as story-telling about "the troubles" in Southern Ireland. Yet

* I have quoted this extensively in my previous article, ENCOUNTER, April.

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what a difference there is in the attitude of the Irish towards their British oppressors! In Tipperary, for example, you will not often hear an Irishman say, "Well, after all, thank God it was the British! If we had to go through it with any oppressor, we'd rather it was you." But there can be few Englishmen who have not had this said to them during their travels in Israel.

ONLY the other day I was travelling through Galilee and spent the evening with the Mayor of Safad and a group of young men, all of whom had been active members of the *Haganah*. What tales they had to tell of that pleasant British trick which consisted of handing over any police station in a dominating position, from which the Jews could easily be exterminated, to the Arabs! This occurred in many parts of the country, but Safad is perhaps the most dramatic example of a cool, calculated attempt to ensure that the Jews perished at the hands of the Arabs. These stories led us on to discuss the corruption of the Palestine Police and the savage methods they employed in conducting their investigations. One of the stories was so terrible that I exclaimed, "When I hear about the behaviour of our men, I really begin to feel some sympathy with the *Irgun*." At once there was a frigid silence in the room. "*Cha*," said one young man, "but we strongly disapproved of that kind of thing. We fought a clean fight against a clean enemy." "But surely that's ridiculous! In war you can't be so choosy." To which I got the reply, "But we weren't making war. We didn't want to get rid of you. We wanted the British to work with us."

I believe that this conversation reveals an important and astonishing aspect of Anglo-Jewish relations. Unlike the Irish, who really wanted to get rid of us from Ireland, the Yishuv, or a very large part of it, was content with the British connection. They saw the growth of the National Home as something perfectly compatible with continued British protection and permanent membership of the British Commonwealth. Weizmann was not the only member of the Yishuv who preached "organic" Zionism; who passionately wanted co-operation with Britain; who would have made great concessions in order to achieve it; and who, after the rupture of 1948, said, "Now, thank God, we can live on friendly terms." It is fair enough to recall the shortcomings of the Army, the colonial officials, and the Palestine Police, but we can now see how superficial were the wounds in Anglo-Jewish relations caused by those shortcomings. No, the Mandate did not founder because of the flaws in the British administration, and there are few Israelis who would now deny that the benefits bestowed by the British colonial officials and the British Army on the embryonic nation were infinitely greater than the wounds they inflicted.

Let us turn, then, to the last two charges of the indictment—the indecision at Westminster and the policy of appeasement. No man told the story with more merciless incisiveness than Weizmann, and the following is from a letter which he wrote to Mr. Ormsby-Gore, later Lord Harlech, when he was Colonial Secretary in 1938:

> What was the record? Complete inaction; paralysis of Government; surrender to Crown; demoralisation of the Civil Service; men willing and able to do their duty prevented by the faintheartedness of superiors; denial of justice; failure to protect the lives and property of law-abiding citizens; in short a condition of things unthinkable in any other part of the British Empire. These things fall to a great extent into your term of office. In vain did we appeal to you to see authority re-established in Palestine. . . . You, Mr. Ormsby-Gore, closed your letter by urging me not to burn my boats, not to go off the deep end. I have no boats to burn. You further asked me not to come up with a flourish of trumpets. Can you in the last year point to a single occasion on which I have done so? I have borne most things in silence. I have defended the British administration before my own people on public platforms, at Congresses, in all parts of the world, often against my better knowledge, and almost invariably to my own detriment. Why did I do so? Because for me close co-operation with Great Britain was the corner-stone of our policy in Palestine, but the co-operation remained unilateral. It was unrequited.

Once again the charge is substantially true. Palestine is a blemish on the record of Conservative statesmen in the 1930s and of Labour statesmen in the 1940s. But sufficient time has now elapsed to enable us to start examining this sorry record with historical detachment.

We can now ask what made British politicians behave in this extraordinary way—a way which most Israelis now feel to be uncharacteristic and un-British. What drove them to it? What made them mad?

THOSE of us who are too young to have been politically conscious in 1917 must use our imagination in order to breathe again the

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climate of that year. In 1917 not only Lloyd George, Balfour, and Milner but virtually the whole of thinking public opinion in Britain saw no moral objection at all to taking over a backward slice of the Turkish Empire and permitting the Jews to pour into it until they had achieved their majority. Weizmann was assured by friends in Whitehall that, if you looked through the Foreign Office papers, you would find that none of the Arabist objections were made *before* the Balfour Declaration was launched. Colonel Lawrence, for example, who ten years later felt bitterly that the Arabs had been betrayed, in 1917 accepted the idea of the National Home and failed to predict that Arab nationalism would passionately oppose it.

What a contrast with the political climate when I first concerned myself with the Palestine problem! I arrived in Jerusalem straight from Dachau, quite overwhelmed by the need of European Jewry to return home. After travelling across Germany and Austria in the winter of 1945, I did not need to be taught the Jewish case. I knew it *by* heart and *from* the heart. And yet, directly I arrived in Jerusalem, I was forced into an agonising reappraisal. What stuck in my gullet was the idea that British troops should be used to hold the Arabs down while the Jews were given time to create an artificial Jewish majority. Sure enough, I did at last come to the conclusion that the injustice done to the Arabs by dividing the country and permitting the Jews to achieve a majority in their portion would be less than the injustice done to the Jews by implementing the 1938 White Paper. But this was a complicated, terribly difficult decision to reach.

What was it, after World War I, that completely changed the moral basis of the Palestine problem? In 1917 not only British statesmen but King Feisal as well found no difficulty in accepting the National Home. Yet, before the 1920s were over, no fair-minded person could deny that, in the process of building the Jewish State, Arab nationalism would be terribly affronted. By the middle of the 1930s the clash of Jewish and Arab nationalism had made the Mandate entirely unworkable, and when I arrived in Jerusalem just after World War II, the choice seemed to me to lie between partition imposed by the British Army and partition carved out by the *Haganah* after a British withdrawal. What had gone wrong? What were the new destructive elements in the situation which were not foreseen either by Chaim Weizmann or by Arthur Balfour?

The tragedy of Palestine arises from the fact that a new historical epoch began between 1917 and 1922. In those crucial five years between the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, there occurred two events which heralded the end of European world domination and the beginning of the period in which Europe is merely one province of world politics among others. The instruments which effected this change were the two secret weapons employed during the first World War, one by the Germans and the other by ourselves. The first secret weapon was the decision of Ludendorff to send Lenin in the sealed train from Switzerland to Russia and so make possible the establishment of the first Communist State. The revolutionary philosophy used by Ludendorff in order to disintegrate the morale of the Russian Army was turned against the West by Lenin and Trotsky when they seized power. And, once the lifeline of the British Empire was threatened by a Revolutionary Communist State to the north, British Governments were bound to reassess the value to them of the Jewish National Home.

The second secret weapon was the doctrine of "national self-determination," associated with the name of Woodrow Wilson. It was employed by the psychological warriors of World War I in order to disrupt the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As an ex-psychological warrior, I observe that our predecessors in the first World War were allowed to do things forbidden to us in the second! We were strictly limited to propaganda and forbidden to suggest policies which, for example, would have exploited the fall of Mussolini in 1943 or the Generals' putsch twelve months later. Our predecessors, on the other hand, were permitted to evolve policies which broke up the German alliance. Once the Czechs, the Poles, the Hungarians, and the other small nations of Central Europe had been promised self-determination and assured that every oppressed nation would be permitted to achieve sovereignty, the defeat of the Germans was certain. At the time, national self-determination was thought of as a fine instrument for breaking up the pan-German Empire, but within a few years it was proving equally efficacious as a weapon for destroying the British and French Empires. From 1920 onwards these two weapons—national self-determination and revolutionary Communism—began to corrode the European colonial empires.

Those who denounce the folly of the authors of the Balfour Declaration surely forget that

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these two forces emerged *after* it was proclaimed. What made it unworkable was the fact that World Jewry began to return to Zion, in the very decade when the colonial peoples were, for the first time, challenging European world domination.

THE classic pattern for colonial revolution was established, ironically enough, by a European people, the Irish. The first of the terrorists, partisans, or leaders of resistance—whichever you like to call it—was Mr. De Valera. In many previous wars civilians had resisted uniformed armies, but no one had glorified them as guerillas and revolutionaries. World opinion still regarded war as a matter for professionals. De Valera got rid of the British by encouraging Irish civilians to shoot British soldiers in the back and to burn them alive in the houses where they were sleeping. He won, because world public opinion was more shocked by British oppression than it was by Irish atrocities.

I learnt the importance of the Irish revolution in modern history in the course of my first long private talk with Gamal Nasser, then Neguib's Chief-of-Staff and virtually unknown. The date was December 1953. I was taken to see him at a private house in Cairo and told that he was the man who had really organised the Egyptian revolution. One of the first questions I asked him was what books he read.

"What do you mean, books?"

"Well, you know, books about revolutions." (In my mind books and revolutions are connected. They were not in his.)

"Do you mean manuals of military training?"

"No. Karl Marx."

"Marx? I don't read Marx. I'm not a Communist!"

"Well, do you read democratic books?"

"What is a democratic book?"

I said, rather desperately, "Harold Laski," to which I got the expected reply, "Who is he?" So then I said, "Well, have you ever read a book about politics?"

"Yes, I've read one. It's called *Grey Wolf*. It's an Englishman's account of Kemal Ataturk and how he achieved national liberation and national unity for his people. That is the most important book in my life. Only I can't ever play the role of Ataturk here in Egypt, because we Egyptians are free Western people and not primitive barbarians like the Turks."

"In that case, how will you achieve it?"

"Ah," he said, "I remember now. I have read another book. I have forgotten its name, but it told me exactly how the Irish threw the British out of Ireland. That book will be the text-book of our Egyptian revolution."

Nasser is not the only nationalist to regard Ireland as the pattern. The idea of national self-determination, achieved by organising civilian resistance on the Irish pattern, has spread to the colonial world. In some cases the forces that dominate the movement are Right-wing, inspired by the ideas of National Democracy. Sometimes they are Communist. And more often they are an alliance between the two.

WE CAN now see what happened to make the Mandate almost unworkable even before it began. Both the British and Dr. Weizmann had expected that the Jews would come into Palestine and build their Western, civilised State without upsetting the less civilised "natives." What actually happened, as we all know, is that Jewish and Arab nationalism interacted on each other and the Arab intelligentsia began to regard the Middle East as the classic pattern of Leninist "imperial exploitation." If the Jewish settlers had achieved their majority before 1914 they would have been accepted without moral compunction of any kind. But now they roused the opposition not merely of the Arabs and the Arabists but of many Liberals and Socialists who also felt that they were "white settlers," like the British in Kenya or the French in Algeria.

Here again it is important to rid oneself of hindsight. For generations it had been assumed that civilisation would be spread by the white man settling overseas. The Portuguese and the Spaniards had settled South America, the French and British had settled North America, the Dutch had gone to South Africa. No one, until the 20th century, seriously challenged their right, or indeed their duty, to civilise these continents by physically occupying them, even at the cost of wiping out the aboriginal population. The French settlement in North Africa and the British settlement in East and Central Africa were the last examples of a "civilising mission" which had been morally acceptable to Europeans for more than four hundred years. Then, towards the end of World War I, its morality was challenged. Of course, as we can see in Algeria, as well as in Central and South America, there are still settlers who believe unquestioningly in the white man's burden. But, in the home countries, what was once self-

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evident has become a matter of agonising re-appraisal.

So the Jew was not, as Ernest Bevin once suggested, "the first in the queue," but the last. If, instead of offering Uganda, Joseph Chamberlain had been able to make the Balfour Declaration, no one would have questioned the right of the Jews to settle in Palestine, achieve a majority over the Arab inhabitants, and establish a Jewish State. But unfortunately the establishment of the National Home was seen not as the return of an ancient people to their own country but as yet another episode in the cruel history of Imperialism. Occurring, as it did, in the epoch of Woodrow Wilson's "national self-determination" and Lenin's Communist Revolution, it was bound to arouse not only resistance in the Arab world but a profound moral malaise in the West.

The first occasion on which this aspect of Zionism was brought home to me was during the sittings of the Anglo-American Commission in Cairo. Most of the proceedings were extremely boring. But one moment stands out in my memory, the impromptu and moving speech with which Azzam Pasha, then Secretary of the Arab League, introduced his memorandum. One passage of this speech in particular sticks in my mind.

> Our brother has gone to Europe and to the West and come back something else. He has come back a Russified Jew, a Polish Jew, a German Jew, an English Jew. He has come back with a totally different conception of things, Western and not Eastern. That does not mean that we are necessarily quarrelling with anyone who comes from the West. But the Jew, our old cousin, coming back with imperialistic ideas, with materialistic ideas, with reactionary or revolutionary ideas and trying to implement them first by British pressure and then by American pressure, and then by terrorism on his own part —he is not the old cousin, and we do not extend to him a very good welcome. The Zionist, the new Jew, wants to dominate, and he pretends that he has got a particular civilising mission with which he returns to a backward, degenerate race in order to put the elements of progress into an area which has no progress. Well, that has been the pretension of every power that wanted to colonise and aimed at domination. The excuse has always been that the people are backward and that he has got a human mission to put them forward. . . . The Arabs simply stand and say "NO." We are not reactionary and we are not backward. Even if we are ignorant, the difference between ignorance and knowledge is ten years in school. We are a living, vitally strong nation, we are in our renaissance; we are producing as many children as any nation in the world. We still have our brains. We have a heritage of civilisation and of spiritual life. We are not going to allow ourselves to be controlled either by great nations or small nations or dispersed nations.

BUT does the undeniable fact of outraged Arab resistance to Zionism confirm what I have called the orthodox British view of the Mandate? Does it prove that the vision of Balfour, Lloyd George, and Milner was chimerical and that those politicians and administrators who decided to go back on our promise to the Jews were justified in the actions they took? In my view, the answer is *No*. How easy it would be, in private as well as in public life, if a change of circumstances which made it inconvenient to keep our pledged word justified us in repudiating the promise altogether! The truth is that, throughout the period of the Mandate, Britain was presented not with a choice between right and wrong but with a conflict of obligations. Weizmann was the only Jew or Arab to admit this frankly. Testifying before Commission after Commission, he reiterated that the choice in Palestine was not between right and wrong but between a greater and a lesser injustice. How often he warned successive British Governments and High Commissioners that there was no simple decision which would resolve this conflict. Instead, they would have to do something evil for the sake of a greater good.

The men who suffered most under the moral conflict Weizmann described were the officials in Palestine. For the politicians at Westminster the Mandate was one of a number of problems to which they addressed their minds from time to time. For the official in Jerusalem, it was his life. Some of them gave up the struggle and adopted a one-sided pro-Jewish or, much more frequently, pro-Arab position. Others took refuge in the illusion of equidistant neutrality. The first time I met this peculiar attitude was when I was lunching in Jerusalem in 1946 with a British Jew, working for the Mandatory Government. He told me that it would be quite easy for the members of the Anglo-American Commission to test whether they had produced a good report.

"If you do a good job," he said, "you will find that you are detested equally by both sides. That will be the proof of your impartiality."

The idea that an impartial decision must be detested by both sides and that justice is a half-way house between two equal and opposite extremes is, of course, a dangerous error. True

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enough, in the administration of the Mandate justice lay somewhere between a complete satisfaction of the Jewish and a complete satisfaction of the Arab demands. But there was no reason to believe that it could be achieved by the simple device of finding the middle point between them. The official who adopted an attitude of equidistant neutrality was in no way morally superior to his colleagues who had fallen off the fence into the Jewish or the Arab camp. For those who became pro-Jewish or pro-Arab were at least facing the facts of the situation, while those who remained neutral between the conflicting national forces could only do so by refusing to face the justice of both claims. Both sides were right; and it was as this recognition percolated deeper and deeper into the colonial administration that the Mandate became increasingly unworkable. For in such a situation the only sane course for a colonial power is to cut its losses and create as soon as possible the conditions for withdrawal.

WAS there ever a chance for Britain to keep faith with the Jews and fulfil her promise without violating her obligations to the Arabs? I believe that the Balfour Declaration could have been fulfilled by building up a Jewish majority very quickly indeed. In order to make this possible, the British Government would have had to appoint a first High Commissioner strong enough to purge his own staff of anti-Zionists, to disregard Arab opposition, and encourage large-scale Jewish immigration. Obviously he would have had to be a Gentile, because no Jew selected by a British Government could possibly commit the lesser injustice to the Arabs required to build the National Home in the 1920s. Once Sir Herbert Samuel was appointed the first High Commissioner, a radical policy of this kind was out of the question, and the only opportunity for fulfilling the Balfour Declaration had been missed.

But for this the British Government was not solely to blame. World Jewry failed equally to fulfil its share of the task, the provision of half-a-million immigrants in the first few years. The main cause of this failure was, of course, the Bolshevik Revolution. Zionists had always assumed that Russia would provide the main source of mass immigration into Palestine. Alas, the Bolshevik Revolution fell like a safety curtain, separating the millions of Russian Jews from the outside world. If Russia, after the Revolution, had remained a democratic country, the whole situation might have been transformed. For with Russian manpower would have come Russian money as well to finance the creation of a Jewish State. But the Bolsheviks won, and Zionism became a forbidden heresy in the Soviet Union.

Yet another vital ingredient of success was lacking in 1921. Even if Providence had arranged for the appointment of a tough, non-Jewish High Commissioner, as well as for the arrival of half-a-million Russian Jews, that would not have been sufficient without a Government in Westminster conscious of its Imperial destiny and prepared to accept military obligations in order to fulfil it. Actually the Mandate was established during the post-war sag in British morale, during which public opinion reacted violently against military discipline and Imperial obligations. The fall of the Lloyd George Government after the Chanak crisis showed how little Britain was prepared to accept new obligations in the Middle East and to fulfil the Balfour Declaration in the spirit in which it had been negotiated.

I conclude, therefore, that it is just theoretically possible to conceive conditions in the early 1920s in which the Mandate could have been made to work without endangering Britain's whole Middle Eastern position. By the end of the decade, however, the opportunity for achieving a Jewish State under British protection had been missed finally and irrevocably. From now on, whether his sympathies lay with the Arabs or the Jews, the far-sighted British official or politician would be driven to realise that it had become a vital national interest to end the Mandate.

THE first sign of this recognition that the Mandate could not work was the British reaction to the pogroms of 1929. As became normal in such circumstances, a Commission was duly sent to Palestine and Mr. Justice Shaw reported in 1930. Even before the report was issued, the Labour Government publicly declared its intention to suspend immigration, an intention confirmed when Sidney Webb, by now Lord Passfield, issued his notorious White Paper. This was one of the rare occasions when Chaim Weizmann's liking for the British ruling class destroyed his judgment. As soon as he had succeeded in forcing Ramsay MacDonald to withdraw the White Paper, he assumed that he had permanently

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defeated the British enemies of Zionism. In reality, something very different had happened. A weak minority Government, which a few months later was to split and collapse, had first surrendered to its officials in the Colonial Office and then, when this caused a political explosion, had surrendered ignominiously to an equal and opposite political pressure. What Weizmann failed to observe was that his momentary triumph over a weak Cabinet had been achieved at the cost of a rupture with the permanent officials, who count for very much more in the long run than any politician. Weizmann had only postponed the inevitable day when those permanent officials would get their way.

Of course, the years thus gained were invaluable. For between the withdrawal of the Passfield White Paper in 1930 and the Peel Commission in 1937 occurred the years of German-Jewish immigration, which transformed the Yishuv into a viable nation. It has often been remarked that Hitler recruited more Zionists than any Zionist leader. Certainly, without the Nazi persecution Palestine Jewry would not have been strong enough to win its war of independence. Yet there was a price to be paid for the strengthening of Zionism by Hitler's persecution. Simultaneously, Fascism had been operating on the Arab world as well; and had transformed a democratic nationalism, limited to a small *élite*, into a mass movement, inspired by anti-Western xenophobia. Tiny Palestine was a battlefield now of contending world forces. If the Mandate already appeared economically unviable to Mr. Justice Shaw in 1930, the need to end it had become much more urgent when the Peel Commission visited the country and recommended partition.

In retrospect, I cannot feel quite so indignant about the Chamberlain Government's failure to implement the Peel Report. In the year of Munich, Britain was incapable of displaying the energy required to create a Jewish State under the protection of the British Army. In the circumstances, the recommendations of the Peel Commission were sheerly impracticable and there was no alternative to the policy of appeasement, as formulated in the White Paper. It is not unfair to describe that White Paper as a "Middle Eastern Munich," since the treatment Britain accorded to her Jewish allies in Palestine was just as shameful as that Czechoslovakia received from France. Nevertheless, it remains true that, with appeasement the order of the day in Europe, it was plainly impossible for a British Government to apply an opposite policy in the Middle East.

The outbreak of war postponed the issue, and victory in 1945 created one last and quite unexpected chance to restore the record. For partition, which was impracticable in 1938, had suddenly been transformed into a workable, statesmanlike policy by the collapse of the Third Reich and the temporary but acute weakness of the Arab States. For a short time after the victory of 1945, Britain's authority in the Middle East was supreme and the Arab politicians were thoroughly cowed by the knowledge that they had backed the losing side. Here, then, was a moment when a British Government, with a huge Army at its disposal, could end the Mandate honourably by enforcing the partition plan recommended in 1937.

It is fair to recall that this chance was first offered to Winston Churchill, who was in charge of the Caretaker Government before the election. But Churchill had been personally antagonised by the murder of Lord Moyne and he showed no inclination whatsoever to burn his fingers in Palestine. So the chance passed to the newly-elected Labour Government, the first British Government explicitly and repeatedly pledged to assist in the creation of the Jewish State. The chance was not only missed; it was rejected with violence and passion by Ernest Bevin.

WHAT is the explanation of the Labour Party's sorry record in its relations to Palestine? Those who put all the blame on one personality, Ernest Bevin, omit to notice that Mr. Bevin's behaviour had been anticipated by Sidney Webb in 1930. Indeed, it is fascinating to observe how the conduct of the Fabian intellectual, when he was Colonial Secretary, foreshadowed on a small scale the colossal failure of the working-class leader fifteen years later. In particular, the form which their anti-Jewish prejudices took was curiously alike. Browsing in the Weizmann Archives, for example, I came on a long private note, a résumé of a talk which took place between Lord Passfield and General Smuts. When Smuts tried to persuade Lord Passfield to withdraw the White Paper, he was abruptly told,

> It's very unfair that those Jews are so well represented. They have got Mr. Weizmann whereas the poor Arabs haven't.

When I read that passage, my mind clicked back to at least a dozen searing arguments which

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I had with Mr. Attlee and Mr. Bevin between 1946 and 1948. Like Lord Passfield, they convinced themselves that, since the Jews were such clever propagandists and had so many friends, it was the duty of an impartial British statesman to treat everything they said with the gravest suspicion, while putting the most favourable interpretation on the Arab case.

Once again, in fact, we detect the prejudice in favour of the native and against the "white settler," which I attributed earlier to the colonial official. To my knowledge, the prime factor in both Mr. Attlee's and Mr. Bevin's Palestine thinking was the influence of their officials, in the Foreign Office even more than in the Colonial Office. I believe the same must have applied to Lord Passfield. The Coalition Government of 1917, the Conservative Government of 1924, even the National Government, in its first phase after 1931, contained men with knowledge and experience of the Middle East which enabled them to stand up to their officials. In dealing with this part of the world, however, Lord Passfield felt as little assurance as Mr. Attlee or Mr. Bevin. And that is why they were more susceptible to Whitehall pressure than Lord Milner, Sir Winston Churchill, or Lord Lloyd.

Many Americans and Israelis believe that, in his Palestine policy, Ernest Bevin was motivated by anti-semitism. From personal experience I can say that this is untrue of his attitude in 1945. Like Lord Passfield, he already felt that the Jews were pushing, thrusting fellows and that fairness required he should prop up the poor Arabs against them. Moreover, the defence of the whole British Middle Eastern position against the Soviet Union seemed to require a continuation of the appeasement policy begun by Chamberlain. At first I believe Bevin was almost entirely under the influence of his Foreign Office and military advisers. He took their word and faithfully tried to implement their proposals by persuading the Jewish leaders to be "sensible." He would secure them full minority rights in an Arab puppet state, run by Britain. What more could a reasonable protagonist of the National Home demand of a British Government in 1945?

It was when Weizmann, as well as Ben-Gurion, spurned his offer and made it clear that the Yishuv would resist a change of status by force of arms that Ernest Bevin's dislike of the Jews began dangerously to influence his policy. It was his habit, when faced by any difficult international problem, to find a solution based on his own trade union experience in Britain. In this case his mind went back to the difficulties he had had in organising the Jews of the East End. He had been troubled by constant feuding between Jews and Catholics, and his solution had been to teach his Union members that religious differences should not be permitted to undermine working-class solidarity. By a strange coincidence, Clement Attlee also had his first experience of Jewish politics in the East End, when he lived as a social worker in an East End boys' club. As a result, both men got it firmly into their heads that the Jews of Palestine should be treated as a religious group, on a par with the Christians and the Moslems. The Arabs, in their view, had a right to national self-determination, because they were a nation. But the principle did not apply to the Jews, since they were only a religious community.

How often would I say, "But Ernie, I've seen it for myself. The Palestine Jews have grown into a nation, and if you refuse them partition, they will fight for their lives."

"No," he would reply, "there's only a Jewish religion, not a Jewish nation. And if those Jews in Palestine aren't religious, they ought not to call themselves Jews!"

I could never move either him or Mr. Attlee on this point. Right to the end, they felt aggrieved because the Jews showed so little gratitude for all that Britain had done for them. On the first occasion that I spoke to Mr. Attlee, for example, after he had rejected our Report, he greeted me with the words, "I'm disappointed in you, Dick. The Report you have produced is grossly unfair."

I was genuinely puzzled and said, "Unfair to the Jews or to the Arabs?"

To this he replied crossly, "No, unfair to Britain, of course. You've let us down by giving way to the Jews and Americans."

A few months later Mr. Attlee's irritation had been transformed into a cold anger and Mr. Bevin's into a violent passion. It was the stubborn refusal of the Yishuv to be grateful for his protection and to conform to the plans he had made for them that finally tipped Ernest Bevin into overt anti-semitism. The British do not normally develop this mania except under very strong provocation. Ernest Bevin felt himself unbearably provoked when the Jews wantonly rejected his solution of their problem. The provocation grew when he discovered that the Russians were exploiting the issue against him,

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and even worse, the Americans were ganging up with the Russians. Driven by a frightening mixture of anger and violent self-pity, he became convinced that the Jews were organising a world conspiracy against poor old Britain, and, in particular, against poor old Ernie.

OF COURSE, there were plenty of sound reasons why any British Foreign Secretary at this time would have been angry with Mr. Truman. Safe on the sidelines, the American President was urging that 100,000 Jews should be admitted to Palestine but was flagrantly unwilling either to send any American troops to help keep order or to relieve the pressure by permitting the survivors of the gas chambers to come to the States. Ernest Bevin, however, convinced himself that the American concern for the National Home was completely hypocritical and publicly accused Mr. Truman of playing politics for the sake of the Jewish vote in New York. By 1947, British policy in Palestine was largely motivated by one man's determination at almost any cost to teach the Jews a lesson. At this stage it is difficult to deny that Mr. Bevin's usually shrewd and far-sighted appreciation of any situation he was handling had become heavily clouded by anti-semitism. One sign of this was an extraordinary credulity. One day he came and sat down beside me in the House of Commons (throughout the crisis he was always ready to talk to me, I think because he quite liked a little opposition as long as he was certain he could smash it).

"Now I've got something which may finally convince you that you're in the wrong," he started. "The Foreign Office have given me their latest information from the Soviet Union. The Russians have massed an army of Jews at Odessa, ready for the attack!"

I tried to convince him that it was just *because* the leaders of the Yishuv were of Russian origin that nearly all of them were fanatically opposed to Russian Communism. Moreover, apart from a minority of fellow-travellers, I added, the leadership of the *Histadrut*, including David Ben-Gurion, felt that the one Labour movement in the world whose ideals they shared was the British. But nothing could shake his *idée fixe* that the British position in the Middle East was threatened by a Jewish-Communist conspiracy, to which the Americans, for cynical reasons of internal politics, were giving their support.

In addition to the anti-Jewish delusions that clouded his mind, Mr. Bevin was possessed by the belief that the Arabs were a simple, straightforward people, with a deep liking for the British and respect for their leadership. These illusions were systematically fed both by his Foreign Office advisers and by a flow of fantastic misinformation, which was poured on to his desk from Middle Eastern Headquarters in Egypt. One of the strangest facets of the Palestine tragedy was the skill with which first Middle Eastern Headquarters and then the Chiefs of Staff in London managed to prevent the Labour Government from receiving the military appreciation of the soldiers actually operating in Palestine. As a member of the Anglo-American Commission, I had spent a morning listening to the G.O.C. and cross-examining him after his formal statement. Significantly enough, this was the only evidence proffered to us which was struck from our record as too secret to be recorded. Hence I was never able to present it to Mr. Attlee or Mr. Bevin. The G.O.C. was quite explicit that the *Haganah* would be able without difficulty to hold any area allocated to the Jews under partition, whereas large British reinforcements would be required to police any pro-Arab solution which involved the suppression of the *Haganah*. Deeply impressed by this testimony, we unanimously agreed to an interim solution, just—but only just—acceptable to the Jews. The Labour Government, however, rejected the report of our Commission before the British members had even returned to London, and I was later to learn that their main reason for doing so was the advice proffered to them by the Chiefs of Staff that it would require two extra divisions to implement it!

In measuring the personal responsibility of Ernest Bevin for the Palestine catastrophe, it is as well to remember this systematic misinformation to which he was subjected month after month by the Foreign Office and the Service Chiefs. If he had been a weaker man, he would have followed the example of Ramsay MacDonald in 1930 and shrunk back when he saw the disastrous political effects of the policies recommended to him by his experts. But Ernest Bevin was the last man to be deflected by political considerations from a course of action on which he had staked his personal prestige. He took full responsibility for the successive schemes which his experts hatched in order first to turn Palestine into an Arab State, with a Jewish minority, and then, when the United Nations accepted partition and the Jewish State

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was born, to arrange for a murder of the innocents.

There came a time when these experts were appalled by the obsession which they had induced in the mind of their master. But by then they could not hold him. He was permitted to prosecute his vendetta until the day when five British fighters, which he had personally ordered into combat, were shot down behind the Jewish lines. I was in Palestine at the time and having tea with Weizmann when the news was announced that the Fleet at Malta had been alerted. I remember Sharett's anxious question, "Will they bombard Tel-Aviv?" to which I had the sense to reply, "This is *good* news, not bad. At last Bevin has over-reached himself and Attlee will be forced to disown this madness."

And so it turned out. With support from not a single member of the Commonwealth, Bevin could not raise the issue on the Security Council and Sir Stafford Cripps decided that things had gone far enough. In the Labour Party he formed a cabal with Mr. Herbert Morrison and almost simultaneously Sir Winston Churchill at last made it clear that the Conservative Opposition would, for the first time, oppose the Bevin policy in the division lobby.

That was the end. Within a fortnight Britain granted *de facto* recognition to the new State.

Must we, then, conclude that, just as it was the personality of Weizmann in 1917 which was the determining factor in the achievement of the Balfour Declaration, so it was the personal prejudices of Ernest Bevin forty years later which ended the Mandate and ruptured Anglo-Jewish relations? If this were true, it would be a nice example of the kind of irony which Hegel liked to discover in history. It would also go far to justify those wits who assert that a statue should be erected to Ernest Bevin as the real Founder of the State of Israel —upside down, with its head in the sand. But his role was not as important—or as ugly—as that.

In assessing that role, it is important to remember one fact that Israelis naturally tend to forget. At any time during 1946 Ernest Bevin could have smashed Jewish resistance and imposed British rule on Palestine for another ten or fifteen years. In June of that year, for example, the *Haganah* leaders—against the advice of Chaim Weizmann—decided to demonstrate the strength and efficiency of their forces by blowing up all the Jordan bridges on one night and thus isolating the British forces. The temptation to hit back was very strong and Mr. Bevin's military advisers assured him that the air force and tanks at their disposal were amply sufficient to smash every *Kibbutz*, while the rest of the Army broke resistance in the cities. It is to the credit of Mr. Bevin that he refused to permit the orgy of destruction pressed on him by some of his military advisers. Unlike his successor in 1956, Mr. Bevin realised that Britain was no longer in a position to "go it alone" and impose her will in the Middle East by force of arms. So when he found he could not bully the Jews into acquiescence, he decided to cut his losses. The way in which the British withdrawal was organised was disgraceful. But at least, when the Mandate was wound up and the last British soldier withdrew, Britain retained her paramountcy in the Middle East and there was still a chance, if the lesson of this dreadful episode had been learnt, to make a virtue of necessity and end British hegemony voluntarily, on the Indian model.

What Ernest Bevin ensured by his anti-Jewish vendetta was that the State of Israel should be compelled to fight a war of independence without the protection of a Great Power. Yet very soon it was clear that the unnatural and cruel conditions under which the new nation was brought to birth had two inestimable advantages. In the first place, the fact that the Jews of Palestine were compelled to fight and to win a war of independence proved to the Western world that they were indeed a nation. We have seen already that, particularly in Britain, it was widely held that the Jews who had settled in the National Home were a religious or, at best, an ethnic community and therefore not entitled to national self-determination. As far as I know, there is only one test of whether an ethnic community is indeed a nation. That test is war. The community must show that it is worthy of nationhood by fighting for its existence, even when the chances of survival are small. It was Ernest Bevin, the man who believed that they were only a religious community, who compelled the Yishuv to pass this test triumphantly. Moreover, the war of independence brought a second and equally important advantage to the new nation. It demonstrated that Israel was not, as her Arab neighbours believed, a British satellite, the advance guard of British Imperialism in the Middle East. If the Jews of Palestine had achieved nationhood peacefully, under British protection, the new State would not have been

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able within ten years to break through the Arab blockade and establish relations with such kindred new nations as Burma and Ghana. There is nothing like a clash with Western Imperialism to establish the credentials of a new member of the United Nations.

One consequence of the war of independence for which Ernest Bevin can take full credit was the final transfer of leadership from Chaim Weizmann to David Ben-Gurion. The aspects of Weizmann's personality that so superbly matched the hour in 1917 disqualified him as a leader of his people against Ernest Bevin. The moment that the report of the Anglo-American Commission was rejected by the Labour Government, Weizmann's leadership was ended. For, from that point on, there was no possibility that the Jewish State would emerge under British protection. Leadership now passed to men who were versed in armed resistance.

It is widely believed that the main difference between Weizmann and Ben-Gurion was their attitude to Britain, with the former believing in the British connection and the latter anxious to break it. In my view, this interpretation falsifies the character of both men. The truth is that Ben-Gurion wanted co-operation with Britain as much as Weizmann. Where he differed was on the methods to be employed in achieving that co-operation. Weizmann, with his liking and respect for the British ruling class, found it difficult to believe that a British Government could be blackmailed into concessions or forced to make them by resort to violence. Ben-Gurion, who felt himself at home not with the British aristocracy but with the British Labour movement, had a much shrewder estimate of the factors determining British colonial and foreign policy. Moreover, as the politician chiefly responsible for organising the *Haganah* and fighting the *Irgun*, he did not share the repugnance that Weizmann always felt against the use of physical force.

No one who knew Weizmann could make the mistake of calling him a pacifist. In the Archives I came upon this passage from the secret evidence he gave before the Peel Commission (I do not think it has been previously published), and it indicates how little he had in common with the sentimental pacifist:

> If, in the interests of the British, the game is not worth the candle, then we can do nothing. Then we say we are sorry it does not pay you to do it. But we shall take the risk. We shall take our risk and every man, woman, and child will fight for his existence here in Palestine. Nobody is stronger than the man who has got his back to the wall.

But, although Weizmann could talk in this way—and mean it—as early as 1937, he knew that he was not the man to organise Jewish resistance. Indeed, he realised that the less he knew about the *Haganah* and the details of illegal immigration, the stronger would be his position in his negotiations with London. As we have recently been reminded in Cyprus, it is not an unusual feature of resistance movements that the leader who negotiates with the oppressor government should be a man of peace, who deliberately and conscientiously averts his eyes from the deeds of violence done in his name.

Weizmann disliked not only the murderous terrorism of Begin's *Irgun* but the clean acts of violence undertaken by Ben-Gurion's *Haganah*. But the repugnance he expressed, both publicly and privately, was not that of the pacifist. I remember, for example, how he arrived in London just after the *Irgun* had blown up the British Headquarters in the King David Hotel, an exploit which claimed not only British and Arab but distinguished Jewish victims. Weizmann stayed, as usual, at his suite in the Dorchester Hotel, and two days after his arrival I went to see him. I found I was the first British politician to pay him a visit. Every one of his friends in the Conservative Party had discovered an excuse for absenting himself. So had those who claimed to be his friends among the members of the Labour Government. In his loneliness, he was touchingly pleased to see me, and when I mentioned the King David Hotel I suddenly saw that he was crying. As the tears streamed down his cheeks he said to me, "I can't help feeling proud of our boys. If only it had been a German headquarters, they would have got the Victoria Cross!"

This remark illuminates not only his attitude to the use of force but his complex feelings about Britain. It is amplified by a letter written a fortnight later, which has until now remained unpublished. The recipient was Chief Rabbi Herzog. Weizmann starts by thanking the Chief Rabbi for the account of his interviews with the Archbishop of Canterbury and Mr. Attlee. Then he goes on:

> I have only just arrived in this country, and am not yet recovered from the shock of the last few weeks in Palestine, or from a hurried journey,

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so I hope you will forgive any gaps or other signs of haste in what follows.

Palestine to-day is not merely a police state: it is the worst form of military dictatorship. To all intents and purposes there is no Civil Administration; that has receded entirely into the background, and my impression is that the country is run by military cliques in Jerusalem and/or Cairo. . . .

When search was made on June 29th at Givat Brenner (a village only a few minutes by car from Rehovoth, so I can vouch for what happened there), the troops had been told they were to "occupy" it, and they behaved accordingly. They began to break into the schoolrooms and into a small laboratory which the children use; they broke into the girls' dormitory; pilfered watches, fountain-pens, and other trinkets; tore or cut up clothing stored for the use of the *halutzim*, and generally behaved like "conquerors." Characteristic of the whole proceedings here were the slogans used by the "invaders": "What we need is gas-chambers!" "Hitler didn't finish the job!" Swastikas were chalked or painted on walls (and also even on the pavements of Rehovoth—where I have seen them with my own eyes!). Everything was characteristic of troops preparing for "The Day."

It has been stated by the authorities that there was no intention in these searches of damaging the country's economy. It is difficult to believe this in view of the fact that in many settlements the whole male population has been carried away into detention, and is being kept in custody throughout the period of the harvest. It is my own view that, contrary to the official statements, the deliberate intention in these operations was to destroy as many of the settlements as possible. I believe that the recent operations were intended as the preliminary stage of something much larger. The military cliques expected a violent reaction to their first effort, a reaction such as would have justified the use of artillery, the bombing of Tel-Aviv and other centres, and so so. But this was realised by the Yishuv, and although they were and are burning with indignation at the iniquities and indignities inflicted on them, they decided not to be "drawn," and maintained great restraint and rigorous discipline throughout. . . .

But I am afraid that since the events of Saturday, June 29th, the situation has changed fundamentally. Something has definitely snapped in the relationship between Jews and British in Palestine, and I, as a firm believer in, and champion of, that relationship, am forced to realise that what has been destroyed is so deep, so vital, and of such moral significance, that it cannot be restored by projects, resolutions, and kind words.

I feel, therefore, that the only thing is to revert now to the Peel Report, which admitted that the British could not rule over the Jews, and that the only way to establish normal relations between the two peoples is to partition Palestine, and set up an independent Jewish State in treaty relations with Great Britain. What was true in 1937 is true, *a fortiori*, to-day, and it is the only way in which the situation may yet be saved. . . . Nothing else can clear the air now. What has happened in Palestine has been burnt into the soul of every man, woman, and child in the Yishuv.

FROM that letter we realise that what was broken and crushed by Ernest Bevin's policy was not the Israeli people but the personality of Chaim Weizmann. For, whereas the Yishuv could survive the end of the British protectorate and be strengthened in the fires of the war, Weizmann's personality broke under the strain.

Yet his statesmanship was still to be essential in the winning of the war whose outbreak broke his heart. Those Israelis who criticise Weizmann as a mere diplomatist and claim that independence was achieved by force of arms should remember this. If Israel had not secured a majority decision in favour of partition at the United Nations and if the war of independence had not been fought in defence of this United Nations' decision, Israel would not exist to-day. Who achieved that majority vote at Lake Success? Not the terrorists of the *Irgun* nor the soldiers of the *Haganah* but the aged leader of international Jewry, who could still shame and magic the Gentile world into recognising its duty to his people. Here was the final contribution of Weizmann to his people's emancipation. For the last time "The Chief" was in command, and though the brunt of the work was borne by his devoted team, headed by Moshe Sharett and David Horowitz, it was his diplomatic strategy that they followed; and at more than one critical moment his personal intervention was decisive. It was an astonishing achievement for a man in his state of health. For surely it was an infinitely more difficult job to achieve a two-thirds majority at Lake Success in 1947 than it had been thirty years earlier to persuade Lloyd George, Balfour, and Milner to make the Balfour Declaration. And the military importance of Weizmann's achievement was that, when the war of independence came six months later, the Israelis, defending themselves against those who sought to reverse a decision of the United Nations, were able to win the sympathy of the world.

Even in this century of totalitarianism, a just cause is still worth a good many divisions. It was Weizmann and his political team who provided the firm basis of international law on which Ben-Gurion and his army could win their war of independence.

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Jon Silkin

For a Child, on His Being Pronounced Mentally Defective by a Committee of the L.C.C.

You are not like them.
Men learnèd with women, with rigid souls are pleased
To measure what gaps your brain has.

In those unstopped spaces your laughter howls
At their pure probing of your defective mind.
You shrink from

That heart defective of pity;
And you shrink from intelligence that with
Use of brutal wood bricks

Is decided, whatever
Lacuna impedes the delirious message of reason
You are subject to the wardress's care.

You are to throb in a house, where God's spat blood
With coughed bone, though mewed up in man's frame
Is not sinewed to intellect

But memory of each flawed
Soul-confronts your passage out building a cage
With bare bars of the iron

Some caged brains spattered
And the blood cursed
As it cooled on the metal.

The chill mind sits in the perfected
House, carefully pronouncing madness.

Yet how may the cold heart be sane;
How shall the naïve intelligence be sane?
Since the pure mind that would love you has
Become discorporate of its love.

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For the rooms they examined you in were loveless;
And the faces shaped like the pitiless wood
Were cold, inquiring, with that madness
Which understands not the purpose but
The applying of what it learned to do.

The chill man once more approaches your searched house.
Only may he perceive how to unlock the door
That conceals what you and he crave. The way
Through mind is a passage through doors love opens.
Love, only. If without love, he but glides
Through the cool strictures of his immoral intelligence.

But there are no locks to your house, child. The blown
Straws of man pass through you. You are howled through by the elements.
Your love, and your fear which is fear of what is not love
Are detained by you:
But the heat and dispassion of the world press through you.

For though lit with love, your soul
That is not intelligenced yet
By reason, a darkness we increase,
Detains nothing.

Without darkness you strain nothing to you.

Perhaps the intelligences must darken
What permits the uncontrollable
Radiance passage. But love which
You have, remains
Undiminished through what madness ever light is.

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FILM

The Habit of Censorship

"We're Paid to Have Dirty Minds" — By DEREK HILL

"If there is a meaning, it is doubtless objectionable. . . ."
"The cinema needs continued repression of controversy in order to stave off disaster. . . ."
"People able to understand foreign languages are not likely to be harmed."
"Social comment and entertainment don't mix. . . ."

"WE WERE WRONG," the Secretary of the British Board of Film Censors publicly admitted last year, and granted a certificate to *Torero*, a Mexican bull-fighting film which even in a cut condition had been refused only a year earlier. *Expresso Bongo* was granted an *A*-certificate without cuts, despite its strip-tease club nudes. The Board passed *The Savage Eye* with exceptionally minor cuts (the mock orgasm of a strip-tease dancer, a glimpse of a homosexual party). *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, which not long ago would have lost several shots, was given an *X*-certificate without forfeiting a frame. During the year the Board tentatively suggested that those specialist cinemas which had been notably discreet in their exploitation of foreign films might soon be allowed to present such films without any cuts at all—which confirms that the case for control over advertisements on public display is far stronger than the case for censorship of films which people have deliberately chosen to visit.

But these signs of apparent progressiveness have failed to satisfy the seven hundred local authorities who theoretically control film censorship in this country. The County Councils Association and the Association of Municipal Corporations are hoping for a conference between local licensing representatives and the British Board of Film Censors to discuss the frequency with which the Board's decisions are being amended all over the country. A few local authorities' rulings show some wariness of the Board's much-publicised "new leniency;" but the majority indicate that its decisions are still considered too rigorous.

One distribution company which has suffered heavy cutting of its Continental imports has announced the formation of a chain of cinema clubs, which by operating on a membership basis will be able to present films which have not been submitted to the Board. The company claims that a "working relationship" with the Board is envisaged, and that the clubs will not exploit their freedom from censorship; but the thousands of applications which have been received suggest that some of the public, at least, anticipate something very different.

FIFTY YEARS OF FILM CENSORSHIP have only further entangled the clumsy knitting which hides the Board's dubious form. The Cinematograph Act of 1909, "an act to make better provision for securing safety," gave local authorities the power of issuing licences to cinemas within their province. Two years later the High Court held that the wide terms employed in the Act enabled local authorities to impose any reasonable conditions in granting licences, including control over the films shown.

The fascination of censoring other people's entertainment proved irresistible to the national temperament. Within a year films were being arbitrarily banned by many of the seven hundred newly-authorised censorship boards, each of which seemed to react differently to each production brought to its notice. The industry was appalled at what was happening, and the Government, still somewhat startled at the growth of the new medium, began to show an interest in the methods of control exercised. Early in 1912 the Home Secretary intimated that he would be pleased to learn the trade's views of the most effective means of supervision. A trade deputation promptly appealed for a national system of censorship by the Home Office, but was advised that special legislation would be required and that Government censorship might not be in the public interest. They were referred to the London County Council, which refused to help on the grounds that official censorship was unnecessary.

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As neither the Government nor the principal local authority would accept the responsibility, the industry set up its own "British Board of Film Censors" whose duty, in the words of its first Secretary, was "to induce confidence in the minds of the local authorities and of those who have in their charge the moral welfare of the community generally." Hence the choice of G. A. Redfern, who had just retired after twenty years as a play-reader in the Lord Chamberlain's office, as the Board's first President. Neither President nor examiners were to have any connection with the film industry, though the Board was to be financed with fees paid by the distributors for each film they submitted. Submission was, and in theory still is, voluntary.

By the end of 1913 (the Board's first year of operation), fifty local authorities had decided to pass on their censorship responsibilities by making it a condition of the licences issued to cinema managers that they showed only films granted a certificate by the Board. By 1921 almost every local authority had followed suit, but during that year a court held that "the licensing committee have no power to create an absolute body from which no right of appeal exists." The hint was taken, and in 1924 a provision that committees reserved the right to review the Board's decisions was accepted.

The local authorities and the Board both had reason to feel pleased with this ruling. The licensing committees were absolved from the necessity of seeing every film to be shown in their district but retained the right to reverse any Board decision with which they disagreed; while the Board, still an unofficial body, could now indulge in censorship with the foolproof excuse, still trotted out to-day, that in the last resort it is not responsible for its own actions.

BOTH groups have lived up to their irresponsibilities ever since. In 1929 a report by a Special Committee of the L.C.C. declared that an official, independent censorship system for the whole country, and for all classes of films was urgently needed, but the situation thirty years later remains exactly the same, as the anticipated conference between local authorities and the Board testifies. The years have seen a number of local diversions, most notably a self-styled Board of Censors appointed by Beckenham in 1932 to control every film show in the area. It operated with such stunning imbecility that within six months Beckenham's cinemas were desperate and local business had been so affected that traders were refusing to pay their rates. The Board expired after a spectacular nine months' existence.

The industry and the Government have each given a lick of paint to the wobbly structure which supports the British Board of Film Censors and may have slightly strengthened the framework and even have given it a thin legal gloss. In 1933 the Kine Renters Society required its members to enter into individual agreements to rent out only films which had received certificates from the Board. So many local authorities (then as now) had been reversing the Board's decisions that the trade feared the Board might be abolished and replaced with an organisation which, owing neither birth nor finance to the industry, might well prove more hostile.

The Cinematograph Act of 1952 extended the provisions of the 1909 Act—which had applied only to licensed premises showing inflammable films—to "all cinematograph exhibitions;" and film societies and the like which had been immune from censorship as a result of using non-inflammable film had to be rescued from the necessity of a licence by a section excusing non-profit-making organisations and exhibitions to which the public were not admitted for payment. The L.C.C., generally more liberal than the Board in actually applying censorship, sponsored severely restrictive amendments against this section which demonstrated a disturbing eagerness to extend its powers of control. Fortunately they were defeated.

The censorship set-up may have been almost inadvertently established, but it is no accident that it has been allowed to stumble on so long without being overhauled. The British Board of Film Censors benefits the three interested groups on which it depends for its continued existence. The distributors regard it as the least of a host of possible evils. The local authorities let it get on with the work while they retain the real power. Finally, and less openly, Governments have always found it anxious to concur with the policy of the moment. Government censorship, it has often been alleged by people who have not looked closely at the Board's record, would be a terrible thing. In fact the Board has been responsive to the influence of successive Governments while maintaining the appearance of independence.

A GLANCE AT A LIST of the Board's past Presidents and Secretaries shows why. After the Lord Chamberlain's play-reader came T. P. O'Connor, an M.P. who had scarcely accepted the Presidential post before he began clamouring for the control of appointments on the Board to be given to the Home Secretary; then Edward Shortt, who had actually been Home Secretary; then Lord Tyrrell, ex-Ambassador to France. The first Secretary, Brooke Wilkinson, an industry representative, was succeeded by Arthur Watkins, who came from the Home Office, followed by John Nicholls from the Foreign Office,

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who lasted only twelve months. "His métier," announced the President on Nicholls' resignation after fierce trade criticism, "seems to be in the artistic world rather than in the business of censorship." The present President, aged 83, is Sir Sidney Harris, an ex-Assistant Under-Secretary at the Home Office,* and the Secretary is John Trevelyan, an ex-County Director of Education with eight years' experience as an examiner on the Board.

"The President of the Board is the film censor, and not the Secretary, who acts under his direction," Sir Sidney has declared, and Trevelyan confirms that "the President sees many films himself, especially those which present difficult problems and those on which the examiners find it difficult to decide." The 1952 P.E.P. report on *The British Film Industry* described the selection and responsibilities of the President:

> The practice is to elect a man, usually prominent in public life, who is acceptable to a trade committee as well as to the Home Secretary and the licensing authorities. When elected, he is responsible to no one but himself and he is not removable from office. . . . The appointment of the rest of the Board lies within the discretion of the President.

The Secretary, however, is merely the Board's spokesman. He makes no final decisions, but is responsible for arguing the Board's case to whoever cares to hear it, including the public. This has always enabled him to begin by stating, "I *am not* the censor." Recently he has adopted the still more slippery, "I am not *a* censor."

Since 1913 requests for enquiries, even Royal Commissions, on film censorship have been rejected by every Government. The Board, after all, offers a Government the malleability of minds trained by the Civil Service with the unique advantage of being such a transparently independent organisation that it has yet to be officially recognised. Herbert Morrison followed countless Tories in rejecting a questioner with the argument,

> I freely admit that this is a curious arrangement, but the British have a curious habit of making curious arrangements work.

But how has it worked? It is impossible to obtain details of cuts or bans from the Board, who make it their sly policy to issue nothing but the barest statistical details of their activities. Yet the Secretary appealed to a critic, "I suggest that the Board should be judged on its record as a whole for over forty-six years rather than on isolated instances." Here, then, are some examples of the Board's pre-war refusals from the fifty titles I have been able to unearth—less than a sixth of the total refused certificates during this period.

1916, *Civilisation* (a classic indictment of militarism); 1921, *The Betrayal of Kitchener*; 1922, *Cocaine*; 1923, *Beware* (an American anti-German film about the ex-Kaiser's trial for war crimes by a U.S. tribunal); 1925, René Clair's *Entr'acte* (refused on the grounds that a comic funeral sequence might give offence). The same year the Admiralty requested that *Battleship Potemkin* be refused a certificate, with the result that it wasn't submitted to the Board until five years had elapsed; even then it was refused.

1926, *Menilmontant*; 1927, de Mille's *King of Kings* (refused because an actor portrayed Christ). In 1928 Austen Chamberlain, then Foreign Secretary, asked that the Board should refuse to pass *Dawn*, a Herbert Wilcox film about Edith Cavell, because German politicians had protested it would re-awaken bitterness against their country. *Dawn* was refused a certificate before the Board—or for that matter, Chamberlain—had even seen it.

1929, Pudovkin's *Mother*; *New Babylon* (submitted for the second time, was refused because of its "constant alternation of brutality and bloodshed and its scenes of licence and in many cases indecency"). *Martin Luther* was refused in case it gave offence, but the decision was hastily reversed as the result of a considerable outcry. 1930, *Night Patrol*, a British film championed by Shaw for its exposure of white slavery in London was refused; the Board's President claimed it would discourage the girls which London sorely needed to fill domestic vacancies. Pudovkin's *Storm Over Asia* was rejected because it expressed disagreement with Government policy. A letter refusing a certificate to the avant-garde *La Coquille et le Clergyman* described the film as

> so cryptic as to be almost meaningless. If there is a meaning it is doubtless objectionable.

(Not to be caught a second time, the Board later asked Len Lye to explain his abstract short *Tusalava* before they came to a decision. "The picture," replied Lye, "represents a self-shape annihilating an antagonistic element." It was promptly passed.)

1931, *Outward Bound* was refused as being religiously offensive, and *The Brothers Karamazov* as indecent; 1932, *The Ghost That Never Returns* and Eisenstein's *October*; 1933, *Extase* and *Poil de Carotte* (the latter presumably because the boy is seen attempting to hang himself); 1934, *An American Tragedy*; *Zéro de*

* This was written before the announcement of Lord Morrison's appointment as President, following Sir Sidney Harris' resignation.

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Conduite; *Bed and Sofa* was refused as being "disgusting," and Richard Massingham's comedy, *Tell Me If It Hurts*, for "ridiculing the dental profession."

The period 1935 to 1938 was an active one for the L.C.C., who during three years granted certificates to fifteen films refused by the Board. Among the Board's rejects were *Amok* (eventually granted a certificate sixteen years later); *Golgotha* (because Mary Magdalene was portrayed by an actress, Edwige Feuillère); the Communist cartoon, *L'Idée*; *The Eternal Wanderer* (because the Jewish subject might offend the Nazis); *Free Thaelmann*; and two *March of Time* shorts showing the preparations for war in Japan and Germany. A two-minute peace appeal backed by the League of Nations and distributed free to cinemas was held up by the Board while they sought the War Office's approval.

DURING THIS LIVELY period, it seemed that there might after all be a Government enquiry into censorship. The Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association protested:

> We are persuaded that the Board has constantly kept in mind the desirability of checking, and has checked, the exhibition of films almost entirely coming from abroad, and made for other peoples, which are unsuited to our English temperament and might appeal to baser passions.

Lord Tyrrell, the Board's President, made his attitude memorably clear. "Nothing," he announced in 1935, "could be more calculated to arouse the passions of the British public than the introduction on the screen of subjects dealing with religious or political controversy." A year later he went further:

> The cinema needs continued repression of controversy in order to stave off disaster.

Disaster was staved off in 1938 with the refusal of certificates to *Millions of Us*, an American short explaining the point of union membership, and *Hortobagy*, a Hungarian feature which showed the birth of a foal. But 1939 was the Board's most unforgettable year. Their vigilant "repression of controversy" led them to refuse a certificate to *I Was a Captive of Nazi Germany* one month before war broke out. The treatment afforded *Professor Mamlock*, a Russian anti-Nazi drama, was even more remarkable. Refused by the Board on political grounds early in the year, it was privately presented at the Film Society. Still refused the Board's approval, it was shown a few months later with an L.C.C. certificate. Immediately after the declaration of war, it was granted a certificate by the Board and distributed to a thousand British cinemas, the widest distribution any Russian film has ever been permitted.

This is a record of a mere fraction of the films refused by the Board, and one which takes no account of the thousands of films heavily cut. A few years ago Arthur Watkins begged the industry never to reveal the Board's cuts, dexterously arguing, "If the public think that something has been cut from a picture there is less incentive for them to see it. . . ." The present Secretary, who follows the same shadowy path, says, "The Board's examiners would be encouraged if it were realised that the majority of their decisions are not criticised at all. . . ." It is difficult to criticise what has always been so carefully concealed. This secrecy suggests a realisation that the publication of the full facts might well provoke an outcry from a public largely unaware that *more than half* of the features they see have been cut by the Board. (The L.C.C., incidentally, make available full details of all their own bans and cuts since 1921.)

THE Board's early decisions, it may be felt, hardly reflect the position to-day. After all, the *X*-certificate was introduced in 1951 to enable the Board to pass films considered suitable for exhibition only to adults. (This was twenty-four years after the L.C.C. first issued its own "Adults Only" certificate.*) Watkins had admitted that the position in 1950 was getting out of hand. "I went to the première of the French film *Passionelle*," he was reported as saying, "and I found some of the cuts made by my own Board so absurd that I had them restored next morning."

Watkins and Trevelyan have both defined what they feel the censor's task to be. Watkins stated:

> The Board believes that a censor should not be an official arbitrarily imposing his will on a reluctant public but someone who tries to interpret that will and to reflect in his decisions the taste and reaction of the average responsible kinema patron. . . . It believes also that it is performing a service both to the public and to the film industry if it removes offensive and distasteful material which cannot be regarded as entertainment and which if not excluded would in the long run do harm to the kinema's claim to that universal patronage on which its economy rests.

And again:

> This assurance the Board can give—that its general aim is, and will continue to be, the reduc-

* The *A*-certificate means that children under 16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult. The *X* refuses them admission entirely. The *U* allows them entry whether accompanied or not.

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> tion of censorship for adults to the minimum and in the case of films of the quality of those listed above (*La Ronde*, *Le Plaisir*, *Gervaise*, and *Baby Doll*) to the point of non-existence.

At least two of these four films were in fact cut by the Board.

Watkins' ideas of "service to the film industry" actually led the British Film Producers' Association to plan a committee to consider members' grievances against the Board and to make appeals where necessary. An industry organisation was thus preparing to defend itself against the Board which it helped establish for its own protection. Watkins recognised the dangers of the situation; three years later he left the Board to accept a £5,000 a year post as President of the same British Film Producers' Association which had earlier sought protection from him.

Trevelyan's definition is that

> broadly speaking, the Board's aim is to exclude from public exhibition anything likely to impair the moral standards of the public, by extenuating vice or crime or by depreciating social standards, and anything likely to give offence to any reasonably-minded members of the audience.

Or, "It's our job to reflect intelligent public opinion." Or, more recently, "We're paid to have dirty minds."

Every decision clearly depends on the Board's conception of "the responsible kinema patron" or "reasonably-minded members of the audience."

The Board has always boasted that it has no written code to which it requires films to conform, though on its formation two firm rulings were announced—that neither nudes nor representations of Christ would be allowed on the screen. The only way to discover whether the Board, however unconsciously, does apply an elusive, unwritten code is to consider its more recent decisions and formulate the principles which seem to have prompted them. What follows may have its omissions; and the Board may be able to indicate an occasional exception. But as a guide to censor's logic I suggest it is as accurate as the circumstances permit. The circumstances, I should point out, include not only the Board's furtiveness but the acute awareness of all distributors that their disclosure of the Board's decisions and arguments may so worsen their relationship with the Board that their future films will suffer. The majority of companies are therefore even more tight-lipped than the Board.

AUTHORITY. (1) *Those established in authority are to be considered beyond all serious criticism, though satire sufficiently light-hearted to be considered entertaining may be allowed. This protection is to be extended particularly to the Royal Family, the Home Office, and the Foreign Office. Under no circumstances may this be termed political censorship.*

When Selznick wanted the Board's approval for a proposed film on the Duchess of Windsor's memoirs, Arthur Watkins refused, stating,

> It is contrary to the Board's policy to pass a film in which Royalty is depicted unless the depiction has already received the approval of the Lord Chamberlain's department. So far they have not lifted the ban on any royal personage later than Queen Victoria. The reason is so obvious it is not worth going into.

Entente Cordiale, a French film based on André Maurois' *Life of Edward VII* was refused a certificate just after the war. Edward Dmytryk was asked to remove a news-reel scene of the Palace balcony group on VE-Day from *The End of the Affair* because "it was not proper that the Royal Family should appear in such an immoral film."

The Board cut reform-school scenes in *Good Time Girl* to satisfy the Home Office. John Trevelyan has said that he regrets films which show the police as inefficient; that the writer of a film about a corrupt policeman should be careful to give the impression that this was an isolated and exceptional incident. A Fabian-of-the-Yard film, *Murder in Soho*, was turned down because "the Board rejects all films founded on recent criminal cases." Further protection is afforded the police by the Board's removal of all scenes which show the construction or use of easily imitated weapons.

Any sequence which attempts to indicate the true meaning of capital punishment has its execution scene details removed, though these are frequently passed in horror films. *Casque d'Or*, *Paths of Glory*, and *I Want to Live* were all cut for this reason. Fritz Lang, shooting *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*, had to film a special version for Britain in which an execution was discussed instead of being shown. Four reasons have been given by Trevelyan for the cuts in *I Want to Live* (a film which has been shown complete in every other country, including Ireland): the gas-chamber method has no application to this country; passing such a scene would prompt British producers to take cameras into Wandsworth to film a man being hanged; an execution is not an edifying thing to show; the scene is more effective if left to the imagination. The first two points cancel each other out, and the second also demonstrates the hollowness of the Board's frequent claim to judge each film on its own merits. Any comment on the third point would be superfluous, and the fourth indicates a worrying conception of the censor's purposes and rights.

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The gentle, native humour of *Carlton-Browne of the F.O.* was allowed, but Communist indictments of Western policy are forbidden. *Song of the Rivers*, written by Bertholt Brecht, directed by Joris Ivens, with music by Shostakovich, cannot be publicly shown in Britain unless more than half an hour is cut because "it contains a large number of elements . . . which are likely to give offence to different countries and which might give rise to resentment and disturbance when exhibited." *Holiday on Sylt*, *Operation Teutonic Sword*, and *A Diary for Anne*, three East German documentaries which purport to show that Nazi war criminals now occupy prominent political, industrial, and military positions in West Germany, have been refused certificates by the Board, who claim that it is their policy not to pass anything defamatory to living persons. These would appear to be the only occasions on which this policy has been invoked. The films have been given local certificates by some councils, and extracts have been shown on television—including the "defamatory" scenes.

(2) *Those in authority over young people should not be criticised, nor should young people be shown successfully defying such authority. Under no circumstances may young people be allowed to see such subjects.*

The Wild One is still refused a certificate. One reported explanation was that "The police were shown as weak characters and the teenagers did not get the punishment which they deserved." Five minutes were cut from *Rebel Without a Cause*, including an argument between the James Dean character and a probation officer, before the film was given an *X*-certificate. Plans to film Michael Croft's *Spare the Rod* were dropped because Arthur Watkins advised the producer the film would be given an *X*, which at that time ruled out prospects of a circuit distribution. Watkins told Croft, "The moral deterioration of a teacher and conditions of indiscipline in the classroom are not fit subjects to show children of school age.... There will be riots in the classroom if we pass this film." He added that in his private opinion the film could do nothing but harm, that it might be shown in Russia as anti-British propaganda, and that if he had the power he would ban it altogether. Croft was later approached by a producer who wanted to introduce a love affair between the young teacher and a girl pupil into the film so that it could be sold as "the seXiest school film ever." Now, six years after hopes of giving the book the treatment it deserved were abandoned as a result of the Board's attitude, Max Bygraves is said to be planning to produce and star in an adaptation.

Lorenza Mazzetti, director of *Together*, was advised by the Board that a sympathetic study of Teddy Boys she intended filming would not be given any certificate unless it concluded "by uncategorically condemning them." The film was never made.

RELIGION. (3) *Care should be taken not to offend any religious groups sufficiently organised and articulate to protest.*

A scene in *The Red Inn* in which Françoise Rosay confessed to Fernandel through the prongs of a toasting-fork, was cut. Details of a blasphemous mockery of the sacrament were removed from *Le Défroqué*. A sub-title in the latest version of *La Garçonne* (the original was banned) was obliterated because the phrase "I'm not a Salvation Army home for tarts" might offend the Salvation Army.

(4) *Certificates will not be granted to films depicting Jesus Christ except in cases where such a refusal would clearly provoke the film industry's united hostility. In these instances the restraint of the producer should be quoted as the reason for making the exception.*

"We cannot take the responsibility for allowing a general showing of any film depicting Our Lord," said Watkins in 1956, repeating a pronouncement regularly made since 1913 when he refused a certificate to *Day of Triumph*. But no objection has been made to the portrayal of Christ in *Ben Hur*, nor has the Board made any comment on the proposed production *The Greatest Story Ever Told*, an account of the life of Christ which will "cost more than any film so far made." Policy does seem to be growing more flexible here.

VIOLENCE. (5) *As a general principle violence may be considered legitimate entertainment when exploited for its own sake; it may not, however, be used with any kind of serious purpose. Violence which can be shown to have any kind of historical foundation may be detailed and almost unlimited, and can be safely passed for children.*

Baby-Face Nelson, in which gangsters were shot to pieces at close range, received an *A*-certificate. "An historical subject," commented John Nicholls. "Almost a documentary," said Trevelyan. "Cold-blooded killings of this kind may be typical of an American gangster." *The Vikings* featured a falcon tearing a man's eye from his head, a man having his hand severed from his arm and later being eaten alive by crabs, and another being flung to meat-starved dogs. Other ingredients included an attempted rape in which the man pleaded with his victim, "Go on, fight me, scratch me, bite me." The

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film received an *A*-certificate. So did *The Stranglers of Bombay*, on the grounds that its eye-gougings, brandings, and physical mutilations were based on fact. *Tonka*, with the bloodiest massacre I have seen on the screen, was given a *U*, presumably because it was based on the true story of a horse, and bore Walt Disney's name. *Attila the Hun*, in which the mutilations included an amputated hand flung around the floor, also received a *U*-certificate.

(6) *Horror films without historical foundation must be restricted to adults, but may use detailed and almost unlimited violence.*

Examples here are so numerous it is not worth listing them. One of the most notable, passed within a few days of Trevelyan's comment that the execution sequence in *I Want to Live* was "not an edifying thing to show," was the sequence in *Horrors of the Black Museum* which showed a girl adjusting a pair of opera glasses which had been tampered with in such a way that knives sliced into her eye-balls and blood streamed down her face.

(7) *Violence in thrillers which involves any hint of psychological and particularly sexual complexities will be cut.*

A memorandum issued to producers by the Board in 1949 lists the incidents it wishes to see reduced to a minimum in gangster films, the only type of film mentioned. These include brutal circumstances attending murder, the use of gruesome weapons, underlining of savagery, protracted killings, prolonged fights and beatings, and blows emphasised on the sound-track. Torture and sadism should be reduced as much as possible, with no emphasis on the method used, on the torturer's pleasure or the victim's suffering. Punishment must be minimised—flogging is specified. No close-ups of the effects on victims will be allowed. Scenes in which women are subjected to violence should be avoided and can only be allowed when absolutely essential and then with the minimum of emphasis. This includes shots of men striking women in the face.

Trevelyan has expressed great concern over violence and brutality in crime thrillers, but insisted that horror films are something quite separate and, he implied, less dangerous. He stressed, "Violence and sex is a dangerous cocktail which may stimulate some people to action."

It has certainly stimulated the Board to action. Heavy cutting along these principles explains apparent lapses in characterisation and motivation in *Rififi*, *Los Olvidados*, *The Wages of Fear*, *The Big Heat*, *Storm Warning* (where the whipping of a woman by Ku Klux Klan members was completely removed), *The Kentuckian*, *Brute Force*, and countless other films right back to *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*. It may explain the bans on *Man Crazy*, a feature by Irving Lerner who made *Muscle Beach*, on *Wicked Woman* by Russell Rouse, and the heavy cutting which has been ordered on the highly-praised *Party Crashers*, which also breaks the rule about rebellious youth. Stanley Kramer's study of a sex-killer, *The Sniper*, was originally banned and then drastically cut. The re-make of *M* suffered even more cuts than the original version. The Board admit that its examiners have no qualifications which might enable them to assess the psychological effect of such films, and no such study has ever been attempted in the cinema's history.

(8) *Concentration on wounds and blood, though permissible in horror films, is to be discouraged in war films, whether or not such scenes are motivated by realistic or pacifistic intentions.*

Shots of one man bleeding onto another were cut from *A Farewell to Arms*. J. Lee Thompson was advised by the Board that if he wished to show a girl shot in his war film *Ice Cold in Alex* she should not be seen to bleed excessively.

SEX. (9) *Nudity: the moving nude may only be permitted in documentary circumstances, when it may be seen by children; stage nudes should be static; other nudes may never be more than glimpsed.*

Garden of Eden, *Elysia*, and *Isle of Levant* were all initially refused by the Board but later recalled and given *A*-certificates. *Back to Nature*, *Around the World with Nothing On*, and *Nudist Paradise* were awarded *A*-certificates, the stripping scenes in the latter presumably being considered as "documentary" as the rest. *Femmes de Paris*, a much-admired comedy revue by Robert Dhéry, was offered a certificate only if all its stage nudes were cut, which would have reduced the feature to about twenty minutes. The distributor refused. Then, according to Trevelyan, "We offered an *A*-certificate if all the moving nudes were cut to bring the film roughly into line with the Lord Chamberlain's stage ruling. This was a step forward." The distributor still refused, and the film has been widely shown under local *A*-certificates with only one minor cut.

The strip-tease club scenes in *Expresso Bongo*, on the other hand, were passed with an *A* and no cuts on the grounds that this was "documentary coverage of the Soho scene." But *Soho Strip-tease*, a half-hour film on the girls in the clubs, has been refused a certificate in its original version and in a revised version since submitted. In *Smiles of a Summer Night*, a few

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frames disclosing Eva Dahlbeck's left nipple had to be removed.*

A nude bathing scene in *One Summer of Happiness* was somewhat cut, but as a couple of silhouette shots were left both Watkins and Trevelyan have widely quoted this sequence as an example of the Board's broadmindedness. A silhouette of a nude was cut from the Japanese *X*-certificate *Street of Shame*, though it appeared with the uncut nudist film *Isle of Levant*. *Girl of Shame*, whose heroine originally appeared naked in almost every reel, is now thirteen minutes shorter than when shown in Germany. Several nude scenes have been reduced on the Board's instructions to a series of rapid glimpses, an approach which tends to increase the erotic effect of such material.

(10) *No suggestion of sexual fulfilment may be permitted.*

The case of *Les Amants* has been widely publicised. The whole build-up of Malle's poetic study of a sensual woman's physical satisfaction with a stranger now leads to nothing but one of the Board's rough interruptions. The long-held facial close-up which has gone destroys the whole purpose of the sequence and coarsens the entire film. Two lengthy cuts have been demanded in the love scenes of *A Stranger Knocks*, a Danish prize-winning film. *Les Héros Sont Fatigués* lost twenty-five minutes in cuts, mainly in its love scenes. Visconti's *The Wanton Countess* was heavily cut. (The Board refused to allow this film's original title, *Senso*, either in the Italian original or as *Sensuality*.)

(11) *Sexual ethics may not be discussed.*

In *Sweet Smell of Success* the central character asks his girl to offer herself to a man who can do him a favour professionally. Originally the girl protested before agreeing. The Board ordered her arguments to be cut, with the result that in the version distributed she appeared far more ready to oblige.

(12) *Departures from accepted sexual conventions may only be facetiously treated.*

The Time of Desire, a Swedish film on Lesbians, and *The Third Sex*, a German film about homosexuals, have been refused certificates by the Board. A scene of Edwige Feuillère kissing a girl on the neck was removed from *Olivia*. But clearly homosexual characters are permitted to mince through many English *U*-certificate comedies, providing they do it for laughs.

In *Sunset Boulevard* the servant of a decaying film actress who now lives with a young writer tells the writer that he was her first husband. The line was removed at the Board's request. *Trois Femmes*, a compilation of three Maupassant stories, was refused a certificate because one story concerned a girl who willingly shares herself among several men. The L.C.C. have given the sub-titled version an *A* and the unsub-titled version a *U*. The end of *Manon*, suggesting necrophilian desire on the part of the hero, was removed entirely.

(13) *Characters on the screen may not witness anything which the audience would not be allowed to see.*

This, the weirdest of all the Board's requirements, was most notoriously in evidence in the case of *The Bachelor Party*, where an important sequence was totally removed because it showed characters watching a pornographic film. Several vital characterisation points were made by close-ups of their faces; the film they were watching was never shown. Nevertheless the whole sequence was ordered cut. The reasoning behind this logic is still evident in the Board's arguments with distributors of Continental films. A girl undressing in private, I am told, is treated more leniently than a girl undressing before a man.

(14) *Foreign dialogue need never be censored.*

In *Mitsou* a girl discusses in French the number of orgasms she has enjoyed during one night. The film was given an *A*. "People able to understand foreign languages are not likely to be harmed by anything said," Trevelyan explains. According to his certificate this includes French-speaking children.

AUTHORITY, religion, violence, and sex—these are the Board's main concerns. Other themes subject to considerable cutting are childbirth, insanity (*The Snake Pit*), drug-taking (*Razzia Sur la Chnouff* lost fifteen minutes, *Three Forbidden Stories* was heavily cut), and drunkenness (two major sequences were cut from *The Lost Week-end*).

How far have we really come since 1913?

The Board's declared objections to unidentified films during its first year of operation were:

> scenes tending to disparage public characters and institutions; executions; native customs in foreign lands abhorrent to British ideas; incentive to crime; holding up a Minister of Religion to ridicule; materialisation of Christ or the Almighty; gruesome murders; gruesome details in crime or warfare; morbid death scenes; cruelty to women; cruelty to animals; vulgarity and impropriety in conduct and dress; indelicate sexual

* Ingmar Bergman, the director, told *The Times* he had not even been aware that the nipple could be seen; he had to run the film backwards and forwards on a viewer to find the offending shot. It took him some time, he said, but eventually he tracked it down. The nipple was visible for considerably less than one second, but the Board had spotted it.

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> situations; indecent dancing; scenes accentuating delicate marital relations; procurations, abduction, and seduction; indecorous sub-titles; medical operations; confinements; excessive drunkenness. . . .

Advances have clearly been a matter of degree. Attitudes remain the same. The most damaging and persistently held is that as the cinema is basically a place of entertainment no serious work should be attempted within the film medium. Almost every decision I have quoted underlines this fundamental belief, and the present Secretary occasionally makes the Board's position still plainer.

"Social comment and entertainment don't necessarily mix . . ." Trevelyan assured an audience a few weeks ago. "Most people pay one-and-nine to be entertained rather than to receive social comment."

Within a few days of this statement he also wrote, "We want the cinema to have an adult approach to life," and claimed in an interview, "If we think a film is a serious piece of film-making, done with integrity and sincerity, we treat it more generously than we would a film which is obviously produced for sensational exploitation." In the very same interview there was also this: "Quite often I see a film which I consider the most frightful trash, but I also know the public is going to love it. And if the public enjoy it let them have it. It's not our job to be judges of æsthetics."

THE Board's effect on what reaches British screens goes beyond what its own examiners cut and reject. Distributors of imported films frequently endeavour to anticipate the Board's requirements by cutting a production before they submit it. Some extraordinary confusion can result. A sequence in *A Face in the Crowd* in which Lonesome Rhodes' drum-majorette bride dances on television to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony has never been seen since the film's Edinburgh Festival première. The Board denies having cut it. So do the distributors. No one has ever offered an explanation.

On British productions the Board's influence has been more subtle. Its forty-six years of activity have played their part in ensuring that British producers seldom tackle worthwhile themes. Trevelyan has expressed his opinion that American films intended for international distribution which expose and attack the less savoury aspects of their society are thoroughly misguided.

"We're not faced with this sort of thing from British producers," he says with evident pride in the Board's effect on native production. A "voluntary" script censorship service is run by the Board to which more than 80 per cent of British scripts are submitted before shooting begins. J. Lee-Thompson reported ninety objections to the screen-play of *Ice Cold in Alex* and fifty to *No Trees in the Street.*

This situation is not new. In 1933 Dorothy Knowles wrote in *The Censor, the Drama, and the Film*:

> Producers themselves complain that the higher morality insisted on by the Board with regard to British films cramps them and inevitably makes them unreal, whereas much that is turned down in English scenarios is allowed when the Board suddenly finds itself face to face with the finished American product.

The identical complaint is being made by Lee-Thompson twenty-six years later.

There has, of course, been progress, and never more than during the past year or two. The examples I quoted at the beginning are sufficient proof. Scarcely a month now passes without an example of something which a few years ago would have been cut.

ONE REASON IS TELEVISION. When it was found that homosexuals, nudists, prostitutes, strip-tease dancers, and the victims of frigidity and sexual assault were able to appear and talk freely on television—without a single complaint being received from the watching millions—the Board's failure to keep abreast of what the public will accept was brutally exposed. The film industry, upon whose support it so relies, has not been slow to point out the advantages enjoyed by its rival.*

The other incitement to progress has been the continued example of the local authorities. For obvious reasons the Board detests having its decisions reversed. The number of films refused certificates is therefore kept to a minimum, as these are very often submitted to local authorities for their rulings. The Board knows that if it cuts a film the distributor will scarcely ever undertake the laborious and expensive business of submitting it to each of the seven hundred licensing committees for their decision on the cuts when he can simply distribute it throughout the country in its cut state. Thus the Board prefers to cut a film, even by half an hour or more, rather than refuse it altogether.

The nudist films showed how foolish the Board can be made to look. *The Garden of Eden,* after being refused by the Board, was passed by 285 of the 300 towns to which it was

* This is not to suggest that television is free from censorship. I once took part in a late-night television discussion on "Horror Films" in which all the climaxes of the extracts to be shown were removed on orders received from an anonymous controller a few minutes before the programme began, thus effectively destroying its entire point.

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submitted, and few of the fifteen licensing committees who rejected it even saw the film before coming to a decision. As a result, the Board quietly gave *Back to Nature* an *A*-certificate, invited the re-submission of all those it had previously refused and gave them *A*-certificates too. "In the light of all that evidence we felt we could not resist," explained Trevelyan." We have given an *A* as a warning to parents and because an *X* would be so much more exploitable."

THE progress which has been forced on the Board cannot obscure one major issue. The Board is hardly any nearer being in line with the feelings of local authorities than it ever was. Since 1921 the L.C.C., for example, has found it necessary to amend or qualify the Board's decisions in 120 of the 156 cases it has considered. True, the L.C.C. was able to award an *"Adults Only"* certificate which the Board did not introduce until 1951. "A fair test of opinion will be possible now that there is an *X*-certificate," said the P.E.P. report. Since 1951, 42 films have been considered by the L.C.C., and in 26 instances the Board's decision has been in some way amended. (Only once since 1913 has a film awarded a certificate by the Board been refused by the L.C.C.)

The Board has often revised its decisions following local authorities' amendments or protests from the film industry or the public. A number of initially rejected productions I have referred to have later been given certificates. (*Battleship Potemkin*, for example, was passed in 1954, twenty-nine years after its arrival in this country.) But revisions are only made when a decision is made spectacularly public. For the most part, as I have explained, the Board works in secret ways. True, the films refused certificates are given their chance by local authorities. But if, as with the L.C.C., opinions over the few films which the licensing committees do consider are at variance with the Board's in more than 60 per cent of cases, is it not probable that more than 60 per cent of the Board's cuts and other unchallenged decisions would also be considered ill-advised if they were known?

The Board cuts about 300 of the 550 or so features submitted each year, and refuses certificates to about eight. The only decline in the number of films cut since the introduction of the *X*-certificate exactly corresponds to the decline in the number of features submitted. Rejected films have actually risen, from five in 1950 to ten in 1958. Eight are reported to have been refused in the first six months of 1959.

Many cuts are made because distributors ask for their films to be made suitable for the *U* or *A* categories, and others because the Board feels that a production should sometimes be made to fit one of these categories regardless of the distributor's wishes. Cuts vary from less than a second to twenty-five minutes. A cut of one minute in the average film would be like removing well over a thousand words from the average novel.

Television and the local authorities each continue to indicate the extent to which the Board is still out of touch with contemporary feeling. Yet if it were abolished, the industry would be back with its original seven hundred censors, an arrangement equally impossible for distributors and licensing committees. Any form of national control, such as state censorship, would now be resented by the industry and the local authorities. The Association of Municipal Corporations recently declared it would resist any control which involved "the consequent loss of discretion at present exercised by local authorities."

A panel of critics has been suggested as the most suitable censorship board.* While this would be an improvement on the present situation, the current condition of film criticism scarcely suggests that such a panel would display much more enlightenment than the Board.

ALL the same, an intolerable arrangement should not be allowed to continue merely because nearly fifty years have blinded most people to its crippling stupidity.†

In America, where film censorship has been even more complex, the Supreme Court has now unanimously ruled that state censorship boards may not ban a film on the grounds that it "is sacrilegious, immoral, or tends to promote crime."

In any country where a free Press is cherished, there is and always has been a case for the complete abolition of film censorship. Indeed, this has been recognised in Britain by the fact that news-reels have always been deliberately excluded from the Board's restrictions on the grounds that the freedom of the Press is an established concept. In the *Sunday Pictorial* a few weeks ago a full-page picture appeared of a girl in a Bikini with a knife stuck in her throat and blood pouring down her body. A light-hearted caption explained it was "all a fake." If we object to this kind of thing in a family newspaper, the remedy is simple enough. We are all our own censors, and are as free to avoid a

* There is no record of critics ever succeeding in getting a ban lifted, but they once—in the case of *No Orchids for Miss Blandish*—got the L.C.C. to cut ten minutes from a film already passed by the Board.

† Films that the Board cheerfully agree might now be passed complete often exist only in their mutilated versions. It is exceptional to find a complete copy of any cinema classic.

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cinema whose programmes we have found distasteful as we are to refuse buying a newspaper whose policy we consider offensive.

What would happen to the considerations with which the Board is concerned if it were abolished? Authority, I submit, should not need the kind of protection censorship affords it. An outcry would be raised if, say, the *Daily Worker* were suppressed. Why, then, is the suppression of Communist films so quietly accepted? A similar argument is applicable to the protection of religious sensibilities. Violence is sometimes dramatically justifiable; but even when it is not, it has never been shown that its influence is more insidious than, say, the glorification of war or the relentless emphasis on material values which together occupy such a huge proportion of the cinema's time without incurring the censor's displeasure.

Pornography would be prevented by exactly the same considerations, and where necessary, laws, that prevent the publication of printed pornography. When Lord Amwell protested that the jokes in the film version of *Look Back in Anger* were "pure filth of the most intolerable description," Lord Birkett advised him that the common law of England was powerful enough to deal with the kind of thing he had alleged.

Obviously children need some protection from certain films. At present the Board sometimes thrusts the responsibility for whether a child sees a particular film on to the parent by means of the *A*-certificate and sometimes keeps this responsibility to itself with the *X*. While a system of either warning or control—but hardly both—is required, the Board's record does not recommend it as an appropriate body for such a task.

The Board's reaction to the idea of abolition is predictable. Trevelyan has said:

> I'm prepared to bet that if the Board went out of business to-morrow you'd have pornography on the screen and the public would flock to it.

This statement is worth comparing with a comment he made a few weeks earlier:

> We are as tough as ever we were about anything that we think pornographic or obscene. We don't want this kind of thing and we don't think cinema-goers want it either.

At the moment we have the Board and we also have a cinema which presents *Dolls of Vice* and *Girl of Shame* as its recent Christmas double-bill attraction. Is it unreasonable to suppose that abolishing censorship would merely mean that this kind of cinema would continue to attract exactly the same audiences with the full versions of the films it now shows in diluted form? And that the circuit cinemas, which rely so heavily on family audiences that the majority refuse to show *X*-certificate films, would take little or no notice? There would certainly be a brief boom in the kind of Continental film that is now drastically cut or banned; but would it last any longer or be more widespread than the nudist film boom, which already seems to have ended?

> There would be a public outcry; pressure groups would get to work; and the end result would be state censorship.

This time, I feel, Trevelyan may be nearer the truth—though not about the end result. The past efforts of the Public Morality Council, Watch Committees, the National Council of Women, even the T.U.C., have shown that many people are not content to restrict powers of censorship to themselves.

Yet the Board could be abolished. An effective system of protection for children could be established in its place. Local authorities' licensing powers could be confined to enforcing safety regulations, as was originally intended. And anyone with a complaint could be required to prove an offence under the new Obscene Publications Act before a film was cut or banned. Is it impossible that an appeal to reason, based upon the national acceptance and pride in the freedom allotted the Press, might free us at last from the wretched habit of censorship?

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THEATRE

Optical Delusions

By Nigel Dennis

OUR text this month is taken from Mr. Terence Rattigan, who said recently: "A theatre is a place for laughter and tears, a temple of the emotion, not of the intellect." Our first reaction to this pure idea was laughter; our second, after seeing Mr. Harold Pinter's play, *The Caretaker*, a storm of tears. We wept for the repetitiveness of artistic life—for its hideous habit, generation after generation, of beginning like Mr. Rattigan and ending like Mr. Pinter. Only five years ago, our stage was pure Rattigan. We pined for Pinters. Now, already, we are being thrust in the other direction. We may not pine for Mr. Rattigan, but we prefer him any day to Mr. Pinter. "Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds."

It is not entirely Mr. Pinter's fault. The speed at which things happen is responsible, too. We should have realised when we first saw Mr. Samuel Beckett's revolutionary tramp taking off his boots on-stage and scratching for the little people under his arms that the like disbooting and scratching would happen quite conventionally on the same stage of the same theatre only five years later. We should have expected this, because it always happens, in all the arts. There was a day when the new prose of Mr. Hemingway rose like a new sun, clear and beautiful beyond imagination. There was a day when the first line of a poem by Mr. Auden made poetry itself seem astonishing. But within five or ten years, Mr. Hemingway's imitators had made a farcically festered lily of the original, and there was hardly a weed of poetry that had not rooted itself in Mr. Auden. This is such an unpleasant and distressing form of cannibalism—the mind of the missionary being eaten, but his flesh left to go beg—that we are half inclined to take sides with Mr. Rattigan and denounce the intellect as an intolerable beast that should be rejected in favour of the wholesome nervous system at the earliest opportunity.

Our trouble is, that this is such a difficult thing to do. Does Mr. Rattigan himself realise how intensely difficult it is, even in the theatre, to get along without a head? Does he not remember how hard the wretched Hamlet tried to act on pure impulse and how the pale cast of thought kept spoiling his honest matricide? Does he not recall how much thought Orestes had to give the same matter, and that even the gods of the time had to discuss the whole question in learned conference? It is plucky, even revolutionary, to demand that intellect be expunged from the stage; but Mr. Rattigan's plea comes over two thousand years too late. Thought is the one incurable disease of the human race. It interferes with everything we do—so much so that even a man as clever as Mr. Rattigan will never be able to write a play which is completely free from intellect. Indeed, we suggest that instead of grumbling about the old enemy, Mr. Rattigan go over to it, as an ally—when he will find immediately that intellect has at least one marvellous advantage: it is astonishingly dramatic. So rigorously does it govern our behaviour, so vigorously does it push us into laughter or tears, that without it we should have no theatre at all—not, of course, that we should want one. Finally, intellect supplies the theatre with two other indispensable elements—vision and illusion. The nearest we can get to an unintellectual play is one in which vision and illusion have been crushed by too much factual persistence, or one in which they are no longer exciting because they are only the re-telling of a splendid original—like a fine dream drearily retold at breakfast-time.

THE CARETAKER is just such a play. It is as packed with emotion as Mr. Rattigan could want, but none of the emotion is interesting because the intellectual visions which inspire it, and the forms in which they are presented, are imitations—or rather, an ability to imitate everything except the very quality that gave life to the original. It was not the presence of Mr. Beckett's tramps that animated *Waiting for Godot*, still less their time-consuming, desultory conversation. It was the vision that lay just

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round the corner, the unseen hope. What they said and did were merely ways of passing the long, depressing hours that stood between themselves and salvation. They need not have been tramps at all; they could have been well-tailored society gentlemen, sick of their empty lives, or farmers pining for some glorious, indeterminate harvest—whatever Mr. Beckett had chosen to make them, his work would still have been moved by the entrancing vision that was always in the wings but never on the stage. And it is exactly this vision of what might lie beyond that Mr. Pinter has been unable to imitate. Where Mr. Beckett had no set to speak of, because the visual reality of a set would constrict the visionary dream of what lay beyond the stage, Mr. Pinter has a fixed, grimy box which is reality itself—a closed circuit. His tramp is a real tramp, pre-occupied with real boots and real lice. His lunatic brothers are not interchangeable with any other brothers; they can evoke only their lunatic selves. The dreams of all three are not dreams at all: they are merely substantial idiocies which fill the stage with business and leave the wings empty. And this is the way in which all original visions are reduced by inadequate imitation into conventional realism—a realism which most audiences enjoy far more than the vision which preceded it. For where the original appeal was to the mind's eye, the copy's is always to the seeing eye. Where the original proposes a mystery, the copy blueprints a fact. "I *must* get to Sidcup!" cries Mr. Pinter's tramp, putting a whole world of human longing into his words. But it is no use. We who have dreamt of getting to Godot, find neither magic nor promise in the reality of Sidcup.

When we speak of imitation, we do not suggest the simple duplication of one author's work by another. We mean that once a thing has been done in a certain fresh style and manner, the atmosphere becomes so charged with it that repeated use of its oxygen is inevitable. But while the boredom of such imitation belongs only to the imitation itself, the tragedy of such imitation is visited not on the imitator but on the unfortunate originator. It is distressing to an author to find his most-particular nest occupied by cuckoos and his tender young subject to eviction notices. The old law of bad money driving out good applies to literary coin too: the counterfeiter soon ruins the mint. It would seem, therefore, that the pioneering playwright must develop a highly-flexible, Protean personality—an ability to change his tone and style just as soon as his admiring colleagues become practised in the use of it.

Nobody, as yet, has learnt to write quite like M. Ionesco. But there is already a good deal of Ionesco writing on the wall—clouds no bigger than a ham's hand. The futility of conversation, the cross-purposes of dogmatists, the squashing of singularity by mobs—it will not be long before we shall blench at the mention of them and start cheering for democracy, technology, and the wisdom of the masses. And yet, in M. Ionesco's case, it may be the originator himself who will squeeze his own originality into an exhausted state, who will suffocate in his own atmosphere. For, in his long battle to write precisely as he pleases, M. Ionesco seems to be in danger of insisting on his weaknesses as well as his strength. These weaknesses would seem to be a confusing of his personal self with the work he produces, and a similar confusing of real life with dramatic life. We will illustrate this charge at once by saying that just as the power of *Waiting for Godot* lay in the unseen vision, so did the power of *The Chairs*.* This peerless work peopled an entire stage with a host of invisible characters. A dream was projected with impeccable purity. There was no intrusion upon it by any sort of real person—least of all the author himself—nor of any conversation that was not necessary to the illusion. The play stood, and doubtless will stand forever, in superb independence—as if no author had ever written it, as if it had made itself.

We suggest that this independence may be found in all the better, if lesser, Ionesco plays—such as *The Lesson* and *The New Tenant*—and even in such minor playlets as *The Leader* and *The Future is in Eggs*. The trouble begins only when an Ionesco play ceases to be itself and appears to become dependent on the author—when it directly partakes in the author's personal distresses, when it rambles precisely as life rambles, when its dream becomes congested with mere waking vagaries.

RHINOCEROS is of great interest in this respect. The critics have awarded all its best points to Sir Laurence Olivier, and all its faults to Mr. Orson Welles; this is a comfortable arrangement but not a just one. In changing the setting from France to England—swallowing in the process the resultant need to translate solid characters named M. Papillon and M. Boeuf into whimsical fancies named Mr. Butterfly and Mr. Beef—Mr. Welles certainly has helped to distort both vision and illusion, in that he has given the dream an inaccurate context: La Fontaine's animals are not those of *The Wind in the Willows* and Mr. Welles would at least have been playing in the right court, if not in the

* The English translation is in the first of the four volumes of Ionesco's works which have been published by John Calder, Ltd.

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right game, if he had decided that the whole play was a satire on the gradual assumption of power by that rhinocerotic darling of the world's cartoonists, General de Gaulle, and played it accordingly. But it does not appear that Mr. Welles was able to decide anything firmly. He seems to have found a certain confusion in the author's text and to have done his best to intensify it.

The confusion in question would seem to be a combination of misjudgment and carelessness. Anyone—but most particularly the author of *The Chairs*—who decides to sport with rhinoceroses, must begin by asking whether these big animals should be given walk-on parts or imaginative ones. M. Ionesco—the visionary in him yielding to the realist—plumped oddly for real rhinos. Mr. Orson Welles, doubting the efficiency of this choice, attempted a compromise between illusion and reality and changed the rhinos into symbolic ones, projecting curious illuminated shapes, *suggestive* of rhinos, on to the back of the set. This is no place for a disquisition on the differences between symbols, visions, and images; we shall only say that the mixing of all three is ruinous to illusion, particularly when the accompanying trumpeting is consistently real. But we would add that the most effective moments in *Rhinoceros* occur when no vestige of a rhinoceros is apparent. When Miss Joan Plowright gazes through the window and cries: "Look, they're playing... and dancing.... They're beautiful!" —the mind's eye responds instantly with a very fine picture of Orphic pachyderms heaving and springing in African fox-trot. When Mme Boeuf, peering down into emptiness, recognises in the unseen rhinoceros below her beloved husband, and springs, as a model wife should, devotedly and fearlessly on to his back, we again visualise completely what we cannot see and hang up the image in our memories beside that of Europa and the bull. But contrariwise, when M. Ionesco shows a man changing into a rhinoceros before our very eyes, we can only regret the impossibility of this enjoyable idea. We would have no quarrel with a man who went into his bathroom looking like the Archbishop of Canterbury and walked out a few minutes later, on all fours, a rhinoceros entire. Nor should we mind if this change took place entirely off-stage, and was simply described with horror by another character. But neither the stage nor illusion can cope with M. Ionesco's method—a man running in and out of the bathroom with a slowly-growing horn and a slowly-changing skin. This is how it happens in real life; how we have seen it happen to very dear friends time and time again—which is *why* it must not happen in the theatre. Petty changes of any sort never register well on a stage: they kill grim reality, because they are hard to see clearly, and they kill pure illusion equally, because the only image they bring to the mind's eye is that of the make-up kit and the horns, ranged in sizes, on the bathroom shelf.

What is wrong visually with *Rhinoceros* is wrong, too, in dialogue and movement. It is not Mr. Orson Welles' fault that the trumpeting of the rhinos distracts from the dialogue: he is merely following M. Ionesco's directions. It is not his fault that the characters all talk at cross-purposes and interweave their respective conversations; this, too, is an idea of M. Ionesco's. Or rather, it is not an idea at all. It is M. Ionesco imitating life, copying it too literally—doing to his own genius what Mr. Pinter has done to Mr. Beckett's. The stage is too full, the voices too persistent and clamorous, the characters too mobile, to leave any room for illusion. A superb idea has been suffocated.

In fairness to M. Ionesco we must consider carefully what might be made of this play if it were produced with style, understanding, and extreme precision. Given the French setting for which it was written, given actors who could stand still and speak precisely, given a starker, plainer background (as in Act II) against which each character might stand out sharply—given all these, the play would lose at least some of its distracting, restless, chaotic quality. But it would still be lacking in purity and exactitude; one would still feel that the stampede of life's rhinoceroses was passing over the author's own body more than over that of society.

In his little skit *Improvisation* M. Ionesco has defended himself very stoutly against his numerous critics and has shown (this is never very difficult) that the critics are united only by virtue of being critical; each has a different charge to bring against him; each insists on the rightness of his particular charge. "You've always made the mistake of being yourself," Ionesco is told; he answers: "Who else could I possibly be?" He is told: "Alienate yourself. ... Watch yourself acting.... Be Ionesco not being Ionesco! Look at yourself with one eye, listen to yourself with the other...." "Our learned doctors," Ionesco concludes, "... have everything to learn and nothing to teach, for the creative artist himself is the only reliable witness of his times, he discovers them in himself, it is he alone, mysteriously and in perfect freedom, who can express his day and age." For himself, "the theatre is the projection on to the stage of the world within: it is in my dreams, my anguish, my dark desires, my inner contradictions that I reserve the right to find the stuff of my plays."

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What we miss in these pronouncements is any reference to degrees of *quality*. It is proper enough to insist that one shall project one's mind on to the stage, but it is not proper to believe that whatever one so projects is fit for the stage simply because it comes from this personal source. Authors frequently make extremely bad mistakes: these mistakes are not removed even when the authors declare themselves creative artists. Authors are always reliable witnesses of themselves, but not always of their times. And when they do witness their times, is the result not likely to be a *cliché*? Is Berenger, M. Ionesco's "little man," not the most jaded *cliché* of our time? And is not the critic who urges the author to "alienate" himself—to stand back from himself and inspect his work with a critical eye—more a useful friend than a dunce? For is there any other way of finding out if one has made mistakes?

In the stage directions of his play *The Killer* (1959), M. Ionesco says of his cast of thirty-seven "characters, voices, and silhouettes:" "It is probable that all the voices in the second act will not be heard. Any cuts required may be made in the first half of Act II: it will all depend on the effectiveness of these voices and their absurd remarks. The director can choose those he likes." This is a charming courtesy, and we can think of many directors who would not lose a moment to take advantage of it. But is it a responsible attitude to take to one's work? If one is pretty sure that one has projected inaudible voices on to the stage, should one not see that they are audible, or shut off the projector? If an author feels sure that he is a reliable witness of his times, should he not judge the "effectiveness" of his words himself, instead of leaving the job to the director? It is a most curious thing, to stand up so adamantly for one's right to self-expression, but not to seem to bother much about the quality of the result. It also encourages the critic to make a proper nuisance of himself—complaining, grumbling, wishing the work were better. For, if an author will not "alienate" himself, a critic will always be found to do the job instead.

One is inclined to conclude that M. Ionesco's most-impassioned beliefs represent his greatest weakness; this is quite common in authors, who often play "witness" to their times in quite another manner from that which they imagine. Thus, if puzzlement, flurry, and oppressive chaos are signs of our times, we can agree that M. Ionesco is all-too-often a most reliable witness of them—that they press upon him fiendishly, and that he retorts by projecting them upon the stage in much the same condition as he received them. But this is M. Ionesco at his worst. At his better and his best—which is the best there is—he does not stand witness to our times at all, except in so far as his art corrects the prevailing indiscipline. The idea of *The Chairs* is not temporal: it is timelessly permanent. Even lesser works like *The New Tenant* and *The Lesson* are independent of time and place. So would *Rhinoceros* be, if the author had given more intellectual cunning to his brilliant dream and not let his stage become what Mr. Rattigan would call "a temple of emotion."

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NOTES & TOPICS

Ideograph's Delight

IN ALMOST every country that has fallen victim to the Chinese ideograph, language reform has become a problem. Perhaps the single exception is Vietnam, where the Jesuits introduced a practical system of romanisation several centuries ago, and somehow made it stick. In Korea, Japan, and China itself, the conviction grows that something must be done about a system of writing so cumbersome that it leads to great economic waste. One has only to see a Japanese type-setter at work to know what this means. Great manual dexterity and ingenious electrical devices have not succeeded in pushing his work beyond a sort of virtuoso hunt-and-peck performance. He has before him an array of 2,000 to 2,500 ideographs and phonetic symbols, and, however complete his mastery of the array, he still has to move across it, if not to hunt through it, before he is in a position to peck.

In all three countries, China, Japan, and Korea, something is in fact being done. Partly for nationalist reasons, the Chinese character has disappeared from South Korean shop fronts—or at least from those in the capital. In the provinces, the police have been slower about expelling this sign of "Chinese cultural imperialism." Even in Seoul it still rules the newspapers and the book-stores.

In China, the aspect of language reform that most immediately catches the eye is the use of simplified characters, some of them a trifle ludicrous. Thus the character for "east" has not really been simplified at all, but merely changed to a cursive form as a tribute to Mao Tse-tung. It is the third character in his name, and he happens to write it that way. Romanisation is being experimented with in mass education and political indoctrination, but it has not yet been introduced into the major Party organs. (The steps that have been taken in Japan will be described in a moment.)

If one may assume that China and Japan must, for the sake of efficiency in a highly competitive world, find ways of writing their languages phonetically, then the advantages of the one country would seem to be the disadvantages of the other, and vice-versa. China must first have a national language. The regional dialects of China are so far apart as to make up a family of languages, and not a single language at all; but, because anyone can read the non-phonetic written language as he sees fit, much as Englishmen and Frenchmen and Germans and Russians read Arabic numerals in their several ways, the Chinese ideograph has been a powerful force to prevent Balkanisation. Any two people can pronounce, let us say, the characters for "American imperialism" as they wish, and the fact that the characters are the same means that the two have a linguistic bond even when they cannot converse with each other.

The great Chinese advantage, on the other hand, is much like the Turkish advantage under Ataturk: an uneducated and malleable populace. It has nonetheless been reported that even among the ignorant Chinese masses there has been some resistance. The peasant knows that when he is taught to read a romanised political tract he is not taught what the old landlord and scholar knew, and he resents the discrimination.

Japan has a highly literate populace, with all that this fact implies in resistance to arbitrary changes in accepted literary practices. It also has an articulate and somewhat truculent intelligentsia, happy to make trouble for the government and to take issue with almost anything the Ministry of Education wants to do. Curiously, the controversy over language reform has found the Ministry and the far Left in the same bed. Most Japanese would prefer to go on using the writing system of their ancestors, just as most Englishmen and Americans would prefer to go on spelling "knight" as though we still spoke Anglo-Saxon. The Communists and their friends, on the other hand, know that language reform is the thing in The New China, and are eager to be about it at home too. So is the Ministry of Education, for rather different reasons: it would like to educate people in a hurry, and be done with a system whereby they have to spend five and six years learning to read.

THE GREAT JAPANESE ADVANTAGE is what the Chinese lack: a single national language understood by everyone and, though loaded with homonyms, generally comprehensible in phonetic transcription.

A second possible advantage is the fact that the Japanese have developed the most cumbersome system of writing in the world—"one hesitates for an epithet to describe it," the historian Sir George Sansom once said—and the pressure has perhaps been greater than in China to do something about it. The complexities cannot be gone into here, except to say that inconsistent and disorderly application of the Chinese system to a language radically different from Chinese frequently makes it impossible, unless phonetic

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guides are added, to know how a character should be pronounced. Although the problem is by no means limited to proper nouns, some well-known proper nouns may illustrate the difficulties. The present Empress is named *Nagako*, but, given the characters out of context and no phonetic hints on how to read them, ninety-nine Japanese out of a hundred would call Her Majesty *Yoshiko*. No one can be really sure, without asking him, whether the present Prime Minister's given name is *Shinsuke* or *Nobusuke*, and a story is told, perhaps apocryphal but nonetheless revealing, of how a newspaper reporter once called the Inukai family to determine finally whether the assassinated Prime Minister's name was *Ki* or *Tsuyoshi*. "We always called him 'Father,' " said the person on the other end of the wire, and hung up.

SINCE the war, there have been three important steps towards simplification of the language. In 1947, the number of Chinese characters to be used in compulsory education and for certain official purposes was sharply curtailed. Mass-communication media have since then tried to stay within the prescribed limits, or but slightly broader ones. Only 1,850 characters are approved for (say) the registration of names (and in practice there are fewer, since few parents would wish to put the characters for "unsightly" or "pregnant" in their children's names). The big newspapers allow themselves as many as 2,400.

In the same year, the phonetic syllabary that is used to supplement and explain Chinese characters was revised to conform more nearly to pronunciation. Only the new system is taught in the schools, and most newspapers and magazines use it. There has been much resistance, and a number of writers will not permit any trace of the new system in even their most fugitive pieces of writing. There is also the practical objection that the revised system takes more space. To send the word that is romanised *deshô* ("it may be"), for instance, the sender of a telegram has to pay for five letters under the new system when he could have managed with four under the old. Since a generation of students that has learned only the former is now ready for the universities, however, it is safe to say that the hold-outs can only postpone the day when (perhaps after they are gone) the system will invade their works too. It is already being put into the works of authors who are thirty years dead and whose copyrights have expired. The most admired of Japanese publishers, Iwanami, has begun to modernise Natsume Sôseki, the most widely-read of 20th-century authors, who died in 1916.

These first two reforms would appear to have become a part of the language. Now, however, the controversy has boiled up again, more violently than ever. Many people who accepted the 1947 measures as unpleasant but necessary steps towards democratising and standardising the language are beginning to fear that romanisation is in sight—that the whole Chinese system is about to be swept away. Last year there was a new Cabinet order on language reform, a rather complex one that requires a bit of explanation.

Since the Japanese language is written partly with phonetic and partly with ideographic symbols, the question of how to divide the work between the two has always been a troublesome one. Should the phonetic symbols indicate only such elements as tense and mood, not implicit in the ideographs themselves, or should everything possible of misreading be clarified beyond doubt by phonetic symbols? Should the greater burden rest with the ideographs or with the phonetic symbols? To cite an example: when a certain character indicating motion is followed by the phonetic elements *tte*, it can be read either *tôtte* or *kayotte*, the connective forms of the verbs "to pass" and "to commute," in the sense of "to pass repeatedly to and from a place." The only certain way to avoid confusion is by reducing the Chinese character to the equivalent of one syllable, and rendering the rest of the word phonetically; and if this is done the temptation becomes strong to do away with the bothersome character entirely.

THE NEW CABINET ORDER is open to considerable criticism. It states principles which have the general effect of minimising the part played by Chinese ideographs. It fails, however, to establish the correct spelling of every word in the language, and it admits of exceptions in such numbers as to be the despair of primary-school children and their teachers. Opponents of language reform have become intensely suspicious. Since confusion will unquestionably result, and since, as the example of *kayotte* and *tôtte* suggests, the function of the ideograph has been reduced, in many cases, to the equivalent of but one syllable in a fairly large cluster of phonetically rendered syllables, might people not be tempted to throw over ideographs entirely? Is not the day in sight when Japanese, like Vietnamese, will be written with a simple alphabet or syllabary?

Perhaps the resistance is again but a holding action, and that day must inevitably come. It is probably coming in China, and one cannot believe that the Japanese, always sensitive to what is going on in the main house, will be unmoved. Anyone who has sighed to think of the number of European languages he could

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have learned in the time it has taken him to learn Japanese, moreover, must sometimes feel that nothing so inefficient can survive in the modern world, whatever the Chinese choose to do.

YET THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST language reform bear listening to. The most persuasive theoretician for the anti-reform cause, Mr. Fukuda Tsuneari, argues that romanisation or any other phonetic transcription would limit the creative possibilities of the Japanese language, since the Chinese character readily lends itself to regrouping into new words. One may perhaps feel, however, that the Japanese have been too exuberant in creating new words—the "new word" that is used once and never finds its way into a dictionary is all too common—and that the best argument against language reform may be rather the reverse: that they need an Academy to discourage reckless innovation and to make them respect their language as the French have been made to respect theirs.

A stable language is a tie with tradition and a generally stabilising force; and a contempt for convention in the speech of the tribe is not unrelated to the giddy excesses of post-war Japan, the "Trotskyite" student rioting, and the general want of civic responsibility among the young. There is little enough tradition already. The language is changing so fast, some might say falling to pieces so fast, that the generations have trouble communicating with one another. Even if modernism and efficiency argue in its favour, a complete break with the written tradition of more than a millennium is not to be undertaken lightly. As Japanese newspaper editorials are fond of saying, "one hopes for caution and self-reflection."

Edward Seidensticker

"The Future of the Left"

THE post-war Conservative Party has retrieved its fortunes by appearing to move from one side to the middle of the road, by hooking the floating voter, by capturing the political centre. It was inevitable, I suppose, that the Labour Party should be urged to adopt the same successful strategy. We are asked to accept the seemingly irrefutable proposition that the only way to win the waverers is to make a deliberate appeal to their interests and sympathies. This is what much of the argument in ENCOUNTER has been about, and it would be agreeable if the Revisionists openly acknowledged that their pretentious social and economic analyses add up to little more than a lucky support for these overriding electoral calculations. Modern theories of the trade cycle, the class-war, and the rôle of ownership in society are all now made to accord with the latest hint from the pollsters. Somehow the miraculous convenience of it all rouses suspicions in my untutored mind. I cannot get used to the idea that the scholastic mantle of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Keynes has—after a brief spell in the custody of Messrs. Crosland and Jay—found its resting-place on the shoulders of Doctor Gallup.

Mr. Anthony Crosland, to do him credit, does not make many bones about the fact that he has given up academic economics for popular psephology. But he should learn to tread more warily in this treacherous field. One reason, he suggests, why Mr. Gaitskell's speech at Blackpool caused such a stir was that the rank-and-file "had not grasped *what the leadership had been saying for the past ten years* (my italics)." Maybe; but there is another conceivable explanation. Perhaps the rank-and-file had grasped all too well what the leaders had been saying and found it distasteful. Certainly no one can deny that the leadership *has* been giving much the same leadership for the past ten years; Mr. Gaitskell in 1959 and 1960 has been talking Mr. Morrison's language of 1950 and 1951. One accompaniment of this state of affairs (I'm not so dogmatic as to say *one result*) has been three election defeats in a row. Mr. Crosland might grasp the point that, whatever other potencies his medicine may possess, it is obviously not an infallible elixir for electoral victory.

In fact, the whole Morrison-Gaitskell-Crosland theory of the way to win votes is based on a fallacy. What is meat for the Right may often be poison for the Left. The survival of the Conservative Party is due to its readiness to abandon extreme positions and accept changes in society which it had long resisted. But how can it be supposed that the same law applies to the Left? The offensive and the defensive call for quite

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divergent strategies. A Left-wing party which is merely content to hold ground previously conquered will soon forfeit its momentum. The electorate will lose interest and see no reason for removing those who occupy that territory already.

In other words, while the Right naturally appeals to the ingrained caution and traditionalism of the public, the Left must always seek to awaken a desire for radical change and a spirit of adventure. Political apathy, the deadliest enemy of the Left, is the ally of the Right. Every Labour agent knows this; so the truth should not be beyond the range of our new political philosophers. It follows that if the political climate is inimical to the Left—as it certainly is at the moment—then the remedy must be to change it. And it is no use squealing that the task is too prodigious; this is what parties of the Left have always had to do, sometimes with the odds stacked more unfavourably against them than they are against us to-day. Every agency open to the Left-wing party must be employed to shatter the conventional thought which sustains the party of the Right, to expose its immoral assumptions, to unmask its complacent optimism.

Take one present-day example. The growth of social snobbery is undoubtedly one of the highly unpleasant features of our society assisting the Right. John Osborne, Arnold Wesker, and a few others working on the same lines have shown much more awareness of the need to tackle this disease than our political leaders—especially those who have finished up in the House of Lords or on the T.U.C.'s table of knights. The point is almost too obvious to insist upon; a considerable proportion of the nation, led by the opinion-forming minority in every pub, factory, workshop, and students' forum, must be made deeply discontented with existing conditions, institutions, and aspirations. (Heaven knows there is plenty to be discontented about, from the squalor of our cities to the desecration of our countryside, from the wretched treatment of our old people to the pitiable inadequacy of our educational system.) But real discontent, *scorching* discontent—and that is what is needed—can hardly be achieved by a party whose leadership seems above all eager to stress its "moderation" —the favourite word in Mr. Gaitskell's vocabulary.

In this context, the whole approach of the Labour leadership to the issue of public ownership—in recent months and, according to Mr. Crosland, over the past ten years—constitutes one of the most extraordinary examples of political imbecility in political history; only eagles could foul their own nests on a scale so alarming. Once Labour's leaders stepped forward to insist that the programme of public ownership must be halted ("consolidation" was Mr. Morrison's great slogan in 1950), the Tory press was given a weapon much better than any they could have fashioned themselves; they could claim, with much justice, that Labour had lost faith in its own doctrine. The next stage was for Labour to present its individual reforms as if they bore no relation to this central concept; thus the whole ethos of the movement was injured, and the ethos, by the way, is more important than the image. Folly was piled on folly, when the leadership further insisted that existing nationalised industries must be sustained by a holus-bolus apologia, however inadequate had been the original conception and however damaging the wounds inflicted by Tory management and interference. A prize example of this attitude was revealed when the Tories campaigned for commercial television. Labour took its stand in defence of the Establishment's BBC without even bothering to consider whether the disadvantages of a conformist monopoly could be shed without introducing commercialism. Altogether, the truth is that Labour's leadership has made its own special, perhaps indispensable, contribution to the stolid conservatism of the nation. The general inference to be drawn from Labour propaganda has been that the nationalised industries must stay as they are because it would be disloyal to criticise, while private enterprise must be largely left alone for fear of provoking too much opposition. Thus Labour appears as the upholder of a stodgy *status quo*. (How I remember Mr. Crosland at one party conference protesting that not one finger must be laid on the efficient aircraft industry; Mr. Duncan Sandys has not shown himself so fastidious.) And all this at a time when the enlargement of the public sector is the key question if the promised fruits of a Labour Government are ever to be plucked from the tree.

THE PARTY OF THE LEFT must also be the party of freedom; that has been one of its classic rôles against the party of authority. The real appeal of Labour's economic programme throughout this century has been that it promised a *liberation* of human beings, offering them a new dignity and some control over their own destinies. Conversely, a Left-wing party which ceases to believe in freedom either becomes moribund, or, like the Communists, a conspiracy. Mr. Gaitskell has enshrined this idea in two excellent clauses in his new constitution; the wording is impeccable. But how do deeds conform with the words? Take a look at the top, where the rot starts with fishes. Labour operates in the House of Commons a more rigid discipline than anything known in Britain's parlia-

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mentary history. Hopes rose that the leadership might be weaned away from reliance on these weapons when the Standing Orders of the Parliamentary Party were abandoned at the beginning of this session. But, with the Crossman affair, they fade once more. Does Mr. Gaitskell, I wonder, ever consider how repellent it is to the elementary idea of freedom that an M.P. should be herded against his will into voting for measures of which he disapproves—particularly when those measures may touch the supreme, baffling issue of the challenge presented by nuclear weapons? His answer must be that only thus can the party speak with one voice. But the aim is not achieved; indeed, the disciplinary shadow helps to aggravate every dissension into a party crisis. And the aim is an absurd one. In a Left-wing party, which ought to be brimming with new ideas, there are bound to be different accents, different groups, different voices. If this fact were accepted as one of the inescapable features of political life in a democracy, it could be transformed from a disadvantage into an asset. As it is, the system approved by the Parliamentary Party reaches down, in an even more vicious form, into almost every Labour council in the country. Instead of being the champion of free speech and conscientious conviction, the party gets the reputation of being the enemy of both. No one will be easily convinced that Labour intends to enlarge the frontiers of freedom while it fails to practise the principle within its own borders.

Thus, since few of Labour's leaders (with the notable exception of Mr. Aneurin Bevan) appear to believe in the twin ideas of a robust Socialist challenge to present society combined with a truly liberating method and purpose, the short-term prospect for the Labour Party may seem dim. This is the reason why it is so necessary to transform the timorous, ten-year-old mood of the Labour leadership which has led the party to its present pass. But the longer-term prospect may be very different; for democratic Socialism does remain the only political philosophy which seeks to satisfy deeper cravings than those catered for by the casino society—the desire to live in freedom in an ordered community.

Michael Foot

I FIND Labour's new statement of aims, in the making of which Mr. R. H. S. Crossman collaborated and concurred, admirable. I am very willing, as is presumably Mr. Crossman, to work out the future of the Left within the terms and ambit of this statement.

In its references to common ownership the new statement reaffirms Clause IV. A careful reading of Clause IV shows that the authors had something other in mind than "nationalisation" in the precise sense. They did not use the word; nor did they speak of "public ownership." In its context "common ownership" was clearly intended to embrace such forms as co-operative and municipal ownership. The authors of Clause IV, moreover, were careful to set some limit to the "common ownership of the means of production" ("distribution and exchange" was a later addition). The most equitable possible distribution of wealth was to be achieved "upon the basis of common ownership."

It might be argued that if Clause IV and the new statement are in this respect so similar, it was a waste of energy and a useless source of controversy to hammer out the new statement at all.

This seems to me a mistaken view for three reasons:

1. Whatever the originally intended meaning of Clause IV, it had in time lost this meaning. Partly because of the misrepresentation of our opponents, but mainly because of the gloss put on the Clause within our own ranks—"common ownership" came to be identified with "nationalisation": and the word "all" came to be assumed before "the means of production, distribution, and exchange." The proof of this was the outcry that went up inside the Party against the "betrayal" of Clause IV, when in fact its original meaning was being reaffirmed.

2. When Clause IV was adopted, the idea of planning had not been born. Any modern statement of the economic aims of democratic socialism must contain planning as an integral element.

3. As a comprehensive declaration of objectives, Clause IV was too narrow and materialistic; it was silent on the human, moral, and international aims of socialism. I know of no finer exposition of these by any socialist party than our new statement of aims.

ANY STATEMENT OF AIMS can do no more than set the framework and direction of actual programmes. Upon these will depend the future of the Left.

Before I come to their content, let me say a word about the purpose and intent of our programmes. Mr. Crossman seems to suggest that it is a sort of treason to want to win elections. He asserts that a Labour Opposition can be more powerful than a Labour Government. For electoral victory he substitutes the new objective of "being proved right by history." He comes perilously near to saying that Labour can only win in an economic crisis.

I certainly want Labour to win the next election. I do not think that this involves trimming

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our sails to winds that are set in a Tory direction. I do not share Mr. Crossman's implied contempt of the people. I conceive of the Labour Party as being able to preside over the destiny and affairs of a prosperous Britain. If this cannot be done, democratic socialism is self-defeating. One of its aims is material prosperity: and this, according to Mr. Crossman, guarantees a Conservative victory.

I want Labour to do the things that are proper to win an election. What is wrong in discussing programmes in terms of actual people—our own people, whom we want to lead? Mr. Mark Abrams [ENCOUNTER, May] demonstrates very well what he describes as the "bifurcation of the prosperous working class." I would simply call this a successful splitting of part of the working class by the Tories. It seems to me a legitimate objective, indeed a duty, of a socialist party to seek to reunite the working class behind it—even if parts of the working class do not so describe themselves. I believe that, within the ambit of our new statement of aims, we can work out a series of electoral programmes that are radical steps towards our socialist ends and that can appeal to a majority of our fellow-countrymen.

Any democratic programme, including a democratic socialist programme, must have plural objects: we must advance simultaneously in a number of directions along a broad front. No one socialist means—such as nationalisation—can be given absolute primacy. Various socialist and for that matter some non-socialist—means must be employed to secure a decisive advance towards our socialist objectives.

Certainly one of our major objects must be to secure the commanding heights of the economy: and one of the essential means to this end must be an extension of various forms of common ownership.

There is a powerful practical case for the co-ordination of transport. In our little island we cannot afford the wasteful use of any means of moving traffic. There is also a powerful practical case for the effective public control of the steel industry. We cannot sustain continued economic expansion unless we start it off in the basic instead of the consumer goods industries; otherwise bottlenecks appear and large steel imports imperil the balance of payments. Competitive state enterprises are also needed in a number of industries.

WHICH OF THESE THINGS should be done in what order and by what exact methods is a matter for argument and decision—taking into account the views of the workers in the industries concerned.

I regard a further shift in the redistribution of wealth as a high priority to be attained in large part by fiscal means. I would put first those in hardship. But I would not forget the legitimate material interests of the prosperous working class. The burden of income tax could be altered in their favour by a corporation tax and a capital gains tax. I would also like to see us explore the technical possibilities of a competitive public hire-purchase undertaking.

Even if we accomplished all these things in one Parliament, it would still be a lop-sided programme. For me these are all socialist measures, good in themselves: but they are means to ends in a different plane.

I want to reduce and remove the evils of a mixed economy run on Tory principles. One of these evils is inefficiency—the failure to secure steady expansion. Other evils are moral—ugliness; public squalor; a selfish refusal to recognise human obligations, both at home and abroad.

I am prepared to be empirical how I go about these things. There is a number of ways by which the Labour Party can, within its new statement of aims, advance in these directions.

I do not know how fast we shall be able to go. All I know is that I desperately want to advance, substantially and visibly, towards the sort of British society I want to see. I do not expect it ever to conform wholly to the dreams of socialists like myself; but I am filled with a burning conviction that it can be made much better.

I have little patience with those who tell me that the will to win, the will to advance towards socialist ends, is no part of socialist faith: nor with those who want the Labour Party to adopt postures and slogans calculated to alienate the people—our people, amongst whom our lot as a Party is cast.

P. C. Gordon Walker

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Beckett, Snow, and Pure Poverty

By Frank Kermode

To know your own *avant-garde* you must know in what direction you are moving, and since I do not, I find it unhelpful to think of Beckett* in that connection. In fact he seems to be a rather old-fashioned writer, and at one time it was permissible to think of him as a poor one as well. The justice of that can be confirmed by anybody who bothers to consult the files of *transition* and to read Beckett's contribution to the volume of 1932 ("Anamyths, Psychographs, and other Prose Texts") entitled "Sedendo et Quiesciendo"—a performance in the manner of the Joycean monologue which makes these later novels seem by comparison lucid and refreshing. About this time Beckett is said to have told Peggy Guggenheim that "he was dead and had no feelings that were human." He was, however, learned in a Joycean way, and was one of the few young writers said by the master to have promise. His inhumanity and his learning and his promise permitted him to subscribe to Jolas' doctrine that one needed to write "in a spirit of integral pessimism" and to "combat all rationalist dogmas that stand in the way of a metaphysical universe." This task demanded a consistent and progressive deformation of language and grammar. Beckett belonged, certainly, to the primitivist and decadent *avant-garde* of 1932.

A year earlier than that he published his little essay on Proust, which I have long regarded as a model of what such books ought not to be, for it is obscure, pedantic in manner, and not, as criticism should be, in the service of the work it undertakes to elucidate. Nevertheless it is the product of a strange and well-endowed mind, and its perversity is of a kind that writers, not charlatans, occasionally display. And it has now an additional interest; for Beckett has published obviously important work, and the *Proust* not only shows his talent at a formative stage but discusses what the important work is forbidden to discuss, namely ideas. It is the best introduction to Beckett, though not to Proust.

Beckett, for example, is more passionate about Time than the occasion quite seems to require, speaking of its "poisonous ingenuity ... in the science of affliction," seeing men as ordinarily trapped in vulgar intellectual errors about past and future, and hiding behind "the haze of our smug will to live, of our pernicious and incurable optimism." The agents of this false Time are Memory (voluntary memory, of course) and Habit. But occasionally we break away from them; some shock, some involuntary memory, revives our "atrophied faculties" and produces a "tense and provisional lucidity in the nervous system." These breaches of the ignoble agreement between the organism and its environment are terrible and isolating, but they are the source of all meaning, and, presumably, all pleasure. Unhappily these "immediate, total, and delicious deflagrations" are not summoned at will. Life, for the rest, is necessarily evil; "wisdom consists in obliterating the faculty of suffering." In ordinary life we expiate original sin, the sin of having been born. In death, or in moments of "inspired perception," we escape from this condition and perceive the "only reality," "the essence of a unique beauty," "that damns the life of the body on earth as a pensum and reveals the meaning of the word: 'defunctus.'"

This is, of course, not entirely irrelevant to Proust; but Beckett's Bergsonism has its own rapt, pessimistic quality. His intuitionist æsthetic is exactly as modern as T. E. Hulme's; but he meditates much more upon the desert in which we normally dwell than upon the delicious oases. The later Beckett is much easier to understand if one recalls these musings on Time and Habit, the inaccessibility of value, the falsity and terror of man's world, the expiatory nature of human life. We are poor almost beyond imagining,

* *Molloy. Malone Dies. The Unnamable.* By Samuel Beckett. Calder. 25s. *The Affair.* By C. P. Snow. Macmillan. 18s.

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especially since we must reject the mythologies or religions which talk of eternity and redemption. Their promised revelations come to nothing; the world is a chaos, directionless (Beckett's characters never know left from right). The Beckett hero is what Wallace Stevens, another Bergsonian, called "The prince of the proverbs of pure poverty."

The remarkable thing about *Waiting for Godot* is the way in which these sad ideas acquire vitality. Enslavement to Time is treated in the play as the consequence of Original Sin; Vladimir and Estragon attribute their poverty to the freely-chosen Fall:

> We've lost our rights?
> We've waived them.
> (*They remain motionless, arms dangling, heads bowed, sagging at the knees.*)

Godot is precisely the sort of tragedy Beckett spoke of in the Proust book, "the statement of an expiation . . . not the miserable expiation of a codified breach of a local arrangement, organised by the knaves for the fools . . . but of the original and eternal sin." *Godot* is "a something something tale of things done long ago and ill-done." And Christ did nothing to change the situation; he was merely one of the luckier poor, in a warm climate where they "crucified quick." "The best thing," says Estragon, "would be to kill me like the other."

The dominion of Time and Habit is illustrated by Pozzo's fussy precision in handling his watch, his pipe, his vaporiser, and the abject Lucky. Lucky, a representative slave, talks nothing but nonsense about "a personal God . . . outside time without extension Who from the heights of divine apathia divine athambia divine aphasia loves us dearly with some exceptions." Pozzo lectures on Time—the past colours of morning, the horrors of night to come—like Swann suddenly apprehensive of the future, breaking away from that optimism which is a mere biological adaptation: "That's how it is on this bitch of an earth." His blindness in the second act, when he answers to the names of both Cain and Abel and is "all men," is another way of representing the enslavement of human perception. When he falls nobody can help him up. The little cloud appears, no bigger than a man's hand—but either it means nothing or is too disturbing to be considered. The *clochards* do not want Godot; they are terrified when he seems to be coming, relieved when he doesn't. Pozzo's last speech tells the truth about Time, and Vladimir sees the point: "Habit is a great deadener." But his understanding fevers him, and is the prelude to an ineffective annunciation. Godot's messengers are all ineffective, and leave the poor with only Habit to confirm them in the acceptance of their due and natural misery.

What has happened to make *Godot* a major poetic play? The pessimism that was an intellectual pose in the Proust book has rotted down into images; the subman in his pure poetry has acquired the colour of myth, the banalities of Habit fall into the rhythm of poetry, the absurdities of habitual behaviour are invested with the machine-like quality of music-hall routines and get the Bergsonian laugh. Our only contact with truth is by means of the ineffectual angels, Godot's boys; and this leaves us free to feel the poetry of falling, of inertia, of the malefic vision, as when Pozzo speaks of this bitch of an earth or Mrs. Rooney in *All that Fall* exclaims "Christ, what a planet!" Men aspire to absolute infirmity, lame, blind, crawling on the face of the earth. "I cannot be said to be well," says Mr. Rooney, "but I am no worse. Indeed, I am better than I was. The loss of my sight was a great fillip." Before the messenger tells them of the cosmic disaster that made the local train run late, the Rooneys join in wild laughter at the Wayside Pulpit text: "The Lord upholdeth all that fall and raiseth up all that be bowed down." Beckett's decaying figures, lying on the ground, sitting in dustbins, groaning along the road to nowhere, inhabit a world in which there has certainly been a Fall, but just as certainly no Redemption.

This pessimism was part of the *transition* programme, but it is now given a visionary quality:

> I listen and the voice is of a world collapsing endlessly, a frozen world, under a faint untroubled sky, enough to see by, yes, and frozen too. And I hear it murmur that all wilts and yields, as if loaded down. . . . For what possible end to these wastes where true light never was, nor any upright thing, nor any true foundation, but only these leaning things, forever lapsing and crumbling away, beneath a sky without memory of morning or hope of night.

So the subman Molloy. His crippled odyssey begins with his observing, in a directionless wilderness, the encounter of two men, A. and C., victim and murderer, the double type of Beckett's fallen man. With his bicycle, delusive support of lameness, emblem of falsely directed movement, he seeks his daft mother, the sole source of sustenance. Later, rejecting a form of protection that denied his humanity, he goes on alone, walking on crutches, crawling, rolling towards his probably dead mother's door, enduring "a passion without form or stations," unable to enumerate his ills, quite unable to tell left from right. Is Molloy the ultimate subman,

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the modern God? "What is needed for the definition of man is an inexhaustible faculty of negation . . . as though he were no better than God." No; Molloy is not the end. He even makes a positive recommendation: the wise response to life is ataraxy. We got where we are by "preferring the fall to the trouble of having . . . to stand fast," and now wisdom is to stay lying down. Yet Molloy's life of falling, shambling, confusing, accepting, illustrates the true nature of all human life, especially as, totally outcast, he has on occasion the power of vision, is freed from the blinkers of habit. Thus he describes the act of sex quite empirically (this is horribly funny) and is capable of intense mathematical activity. But the moral is this:

> to know nothing is nothing, not to want to know anything likewise, but to be beyond knowing anything, to know you are beyond knowing anything, that is when peace enters in, to the soul of the incurious seeker.

Then there may be a message: "Don't fret, Molloy, we're coming." "Well, I suppose you have to try everything once, succour included, to get a complete picture of the resources of their planet. I lapsed down to the bottom of the ditch." Molloy is, like everybody else, a murderer. His last image is again of the encounter between A. and C., Abel and Cain. "One had a club." The message came to nothing.

The moderately cheerful ataraxy of Molloy in this, the most lucid part of the trilogy, is supplemented by the story of Moran, time-bound and self-serving, whose job it is to find Molloy. His life has the cruel order of habit: he bullies his servant, torments his son, goes prudentially to Mass, masturbates systematically, and is proud of his garden. The mad barren precision of his life is one of Beckett's best things, and so is its collapse. Moran loses his son and his purpose; he lies on the ground, in love with paralysis, and acts only in order to kill a man. The messenger who comes to him is unintelligible, and seems to say that according to the Boss, a thing of beauty is a joy for ever. Could he have meant human life? Moran, less wise than Molloy, crawls homeward and speculates theologically. One problem, what was God doing before the creation? is the classic forbidden enquiry, answered by Augustine with patristic humour: devising hell for people who ask such questions. We must endure *sedendo et quiesciendo*. Moran's garden is decayed; he falls into the poverty brought on us in the first place by wicked curiosity.

Molloy is a powerful book, rich in imagery and theological wit. Yet it is an example of the harm that could come to artists devoted to what Yvor Winters calls "primitivism and decadence," to rendering the delinquency of modern humanity by a deliquescence of form and language. The same may be said more forcibly of *Malone Dies*, the second novel of the trilogy. Its fullness of intellect and its poetry are occasionally Joycean, and there is a wonderful development of Molloy's words on love-making (Malone's own sexual activity is even more bizarre than Molloy's): "Ah, how stupid I am, I see what it is, they must be loving each other, that must be how it is done." Malone or MacMann (son of man) is bedridden and hazily situated in the world. He lives in mortal tedium. The wisest animal in the book is a learned parrot whose attempt to speak the old tag *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu* always fails after the first three words, and so strikes a blow for pessimistic Bergsonism.

But "MALONE DIES" REMINDS us that the nearer a book becomes to directionlessness, to absolute quiescence, the more trying it is to read, especially when it has no paragraphs. And the last novel, *The Unnamable*, gets even nearer to the motionless and senseless subman-god, inhabiting the darkness like a Demogorgon of impotence. He represents the hopelessness of fallen man distilled to such purity that no actual man could ever achieve it, and all are happy compared with him; so that, paradoxically, "I alone am man and all the rest divine." He speaks the dirty *logos* and suffers all: "All these Murphys, Mollys, and Malones. . . . They never suffered my pains, their pains are nothing compared to mine" (no sorrow like unto his sorrow). He is Existence, a "big talking ball," life without the other God; the desperate earth, for which God does nothing except to send inaudible or unintelligible messages. Even Mahood (son of God?) has died uselessly. The paragraph of 130 pages ends: "I can't go on. I'll go on." This is the only God we are entitled to, our own true image.

One may as well allow these books to succeed in their determined attempt to defeat comment. They are almost entirely unsuccessful; we ought to be frank about this, because literary people are usually too willing to take the will for the deed. In Beckett's plays the theatrical demand for communicable rhythms and relatively crude satisfactions has had a beneficent effect. But in the novels he yields progressively to the magnetic pull of the primitive, to the desire to achieve, by various forms of decadence and deformation, some Work that eludes the intellect, avoids the spread nets of habitual meaning. Beckett is often allegorical, but he is allegorical in carefully fitful patches, providing illusive toeholds to any reader scrambling for sense. The formal effect is almost exactly described by Winters in his

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comment on Joyce: "The procedure leads to indiscriminateness at every turn.... He is like Whitman trying to express a loose America by writing loose poetry. This fallacy, the fallacy of expressive, or imitative form, recurs constantly in modern literature." There is indeed ample reason to think that Beckett's atavistic assumptions are still widely held, and we have recently been finding out just how unsympathetic they are to people who do not go in for "mythical thinking" because they possess a scientific worldview.

AND THAT OF COURSE BRINGS US to C. P. Snow, and the new novel in the Lewis Eliot sequence. Apart from their both admiring Proust, there are no resemblances, only interesting differences, between Beckett and Snow. Each stands for a lot of what the other deplores. Snow, for all his gifts of pathos, is, like most scientists, a meliorist at least, and when he speaks of the "resonance between what Lewis Eliot sees and what he feels" he is not thinking of the inner Eliot as a subman. What Eliot sees is limited by the mode of feeling allowed him by Snow, and this is free of atavism but determinedly old-fashioned. I shall have to let the virtues of this book go without saying, though they are considerable, deriving partly from the author's power of narrative, partly from his honesty about the milieux he knows, and partly from an authentic compassion. What I want to do is sketch some of the ways in which such a writer is a-typical, not what we now expect of artists, whereas Beckett is exactly typical.

Scientists are as a rule much more confident than "we" are about judgments of character and ability; they have an established optimism about human achievement and a ruthlessness about failure which makes them confident of identifying either. You can tell when a scientist is successful; the rungs are clearly marked *F.R.S.*, etc. This is a calculus they trust. One thing it cannot possibly measure, however, is what Lawrence called "the last naked him"—the essential naïve core of innocence which he thought to be a possession of the "human individual" but not of "the social being."

> It seems to me that when the human being becomes too much divided between his subjective and objective consciousness, at last something splits and he becomes a social being... a divided thing hinged together but not strictly individual.

Lawrence was talking about the Forsytes, but here, and in his strictures on Galsworthy's treatment of sex, he might be talking of Eliot and his friends. Snow, for all the sophisticated recording of high academic subterfuge in the face of Justice, for all the skill that makes his wronged scientist odious and the slightly absurd Bursar morally ambiguous, is never much interested in, probably doubts the existence of, "the last naked him," an expression you could apply to the heroes of Lawrence and Beckett alike. Character is registered with physiognomic simplicity: "a reckless face... underneath full lids, her eyes were narrow, treacle-brown, disrespectful, and amused." Or, on the same page, "He was a secretive man: people, even those nearest him, thought him cautious, calculating, capable of being ruthless." As to ability, we see how this is judged in college: "Brown's reputation had kept steady since my time, Crawford's had climbed a bit, Nightingale's had rocketed." These are social men: we are concerned with "the shifts, the calculations, the self-seekingness of men making their way." Women are mostly spectators here, but are often assessed by a different measure, their sexual activity, or what can be inferred of it. I notice that when somebody does something unexpected, out of character, like the smart barrister at the end, Eliot is always more surprised than I am.

All the same, it has to be admitted that this is how, from day to day, we do go about judging and estimating people; we aren't much concerned with their nuclear innocence, nor yet with their basic poverty. On the whole we find

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life disappointing rather than desperate; and so, in a sense, Snow, who asks us to throw ourselves into no special posture to read him, is more concerned than Beckett with what daily concerns us. It is only by an effort of will that we can cease to be interested in what interests him. *Sub specie temporis* his Combination Rooms say more to us than Beckett's wet and windy plains, his grovelling exiles. (Let's leave Eternity out of it.) And he's also, it must be said, a great deal easier and more pleasant to read.

Frank Kermode

When the Army Debunks the Army

A Legend of the Korean War — By WILLIAM PETERS

WILL we have to wait decades for a final assessment of the Korean War's place in history? Some aspects of it have laid hold of the public imagination; none more so than the question of the behaviour of the American prisoners of war. In the public reaction to reports of this behaviour, three dominant themes emerged.

1. The "atrocity" theme. The physical treatment of American POW's by their North Korean and Chinese captors was taken to be unprecedentedly barbarous. 2. The "brainwashing" theme. The Communists were believed to have used mysterious and tremendously effective techniques to convert American prisoners to their ideology.

Both of these notions soon waned in the public interest, and were replaced by 3. (apparently more tenacious), which held that American POW behaviour had been unprecedentedly bad, with wholesale collaboration and death due not to any mistreatment by the Communists but rather to a breakdown in discipline, patriotism, moral values, and to simple physical inadequacy. A corollary to this theme was an attempt at explanation in terms of general social decay, the "softness" of American life, and a lack of adherence to basic American beliefs in the Home, Church, Government, and School.

The leading proponent of this "misconduct" theme is a 53-year-old staff writer for the *New Yorker*, Eugene Kinkead, who originally wrote a widely noted "Reporter at Large" article in that magazine, re-wrote it for the mass-circulation *McCall's* magazine, and then published it all anew in a book called *In Every War But One* (published last year in New York and recently in London under a different title*).

The book poses as a factual report of a massive Army study of POW behaviour, issued with the stamp of approval of the U.S. Department of Defense. Actually it represents the views of a small group of U.S. officers and officials, the Defense Department's "approval" consisting solely of a statement that no classified information is revealed. In the entire book only ten individuals are quoted, of whom two are anonymous and only one is identified as a former POW. Kinkead himself tells us that his interviews (of which the book is solely composed) began with an Assistant Secretary of the Army who then personally selected the nine others. In a letter to the New York magazine *The Reporter*, the author has stated that he deliberately excluded from the book "material on which there was no Army unanimity." He admits that virtually every aspect of the POW question is controversial, but explains that "I felt the best way I could [avoid confusion and controversy] was by staying within the framework of the Army study." But there is not, and never was, an "Army study" in the sense of a single, unified research project carried out to assess POW behaviour. "The Army study" which Kinkead cites throughout his book is, in fact, only selected fragments of a large number of official studies, each conducted for a different specific purpose and from which only occasional material emerged which was even applicable

* EUGENE KINKEAD: *Why They Collaborated*. Longmans. 18s.

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to the questions raised by Kinkead's Army mentors.

From this hodge-podge of material and special viewpoints, Kinkead has selected those which tend to prove his thesis. The result is a mine of misinformation. Citing ill-treatment of American prisoners during the Revolution, the Civil War, and World War II, the author states flatly in his first paragraph that in these wars "there was no wholesale breakdown of morale or wholesale collaboration with the captors...." History records differently. During the Civil War, for example, 3,170 Union and 5,452 Confederate prisoners of war went over completely to the enemy, enlisting and bearing arms against their former comrades. Despite Kinkead's contention to the contrary, there is nothing to equal this in the Korean War. We are told by Kinkead that no American POW's managed to escape in the Korean War; later this is qualified to read that "there was not a single *successful* American escape from a *permanent prison camp*." The fact is that a good many American POW's escaped: from prison camps, in transit, and even from solitary-confinement punishment-cells. Many of these escapes were unsuccessful: the prisoners were recaptured; but more than a few managed to re-cross the front lines (despite difficulties unprecedented in former wars). Kinkead's qualification "from a permanent prison camp" is an evasion of fact to prove a point; the first permanent POW camp was not set up until January 1951, just six months before truce negotiations began. It is probable that escape attempts decreased after negotiations commenced; still, some Americans escaped even *after* truce negotiations began.

This careful qualification of a statement in order to mislead is employed throughout. Thus, we are told that "the Communists rarely used torture," and that "the Army has not found a single verifiable case in which they used it for the specific purpose of forcing a man to collaborate or to accept their convictions. . . ." It is not until 78 pages later that we are given the Army's definition of torture, probably the most naïve ever attempted:

> The Army defines torture as the application of pain so extreme that it causes a man to faint or lose control of his will. . . . The bastinado, the iron maiden, the rack, water dropping unceasingly on the head, bamboo splinters stuck under the fingernails and ignited—these are forms of torture. . . .

Once again, even this narrowing of definition fails to make the basic statement true, for the Communists did, in fact, use torture. There is testimony before a House committee (by the Assistant General Counsel of the Defense Department) that "there were Air Force people who were considered to be involved in what we might call collaboration, but none, not one, that engaged in this experience without having varied degrees, and sometimes very intense degrees, of coercion and torture. . . ." There are also reports from Air Force commanders themselves about "inhumane treatment, tortures, and degradation," and we also have Derek Kinne's remarkable book, *The Wooden Boxes* (Frederick Muller, London). I, myself, in the course of research on other aspects of the POW question, have interviewed American prisoners who were pistol-whipped, beaten with rifle butts, sticks, and poles, who saw fellow prisoners spread-eagled and pounded with nail-studded boards and suspended face down from rafters by their hands and feet to be beaten with heavy sticks. I can refer Mr. Kinkead to men who, exhausted after hours or days of such torture, were placed on their stomachs on the ground, tied hand, foot, and neck in such a way that the lowering of their feet would result in strangulation.

THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THESE and other tortures were used "for the specific purpose of forcing a man to collaborate or to accept their convictions" is clearly academic. The fact is that all of the men were under pressure to collaborate, that torture was part of the total pressure, and that virtually all of the men knew it and were continually threatened with it. Kinkead's pretence that torture was inflicted only on prisoners who "had lied or committed other infringements of Chinese civil or military law" is an evasion of the fact that Chinese civil and military law were used specifically to implement goals of indoctrination in China and in the Korean POW camps.

Kinkead's statement that "the high death rate was not due primarily to Communist maltreatment—that it could be accounted for largely by the ignorance or the callousness of the prisoners themselves," is disproved by his own figures. Of 5,981 Army men known to have been in prison camps, all but 485—or eight per cent—were taken prisoner in the first year of the war. (These figures, by the way, which are cited in the book, differ from those which appeared in Kinkead's original *New Yorker* article.) Of the 2,634 Army captives who died, 99·6 per cent died during the first year; this surely implies conditions different from those which prevailed later. Certainly, ignorant prisoners learned a thing or two and callous prisoners became less so; but this would not account for such a drastic decrease in the death rate.

But Kinkead's basic thesis is "collaboration."

> . . . almost one out of every three American prisoners in Korea was guilty of some sort of collaboration with the enemy. . . . One man in

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> every seven, or more than thirteen per cent, was guilty of serious collaboration . . . the majority had yielded in some way to Communist pressure. . . .

These judgments, a careful reading of the book makes clear, are based on (1) raw uninterpreted statements of POW's about themselves and others, (2) a complicated (and naïve) rating-system to evaluate these statements, and (3) the formal status of individual POW's in the prison camps (which might or might not shed light on true status, for one device of the Chinese was to make prisoners who had not collaborated, look like collaborators by bestowing special favours upon them).

How extensive was collaboration? In the end, only 14 Army POW's faced courts-martial for their alleged activities as prisoners; only 11 were convicted. An additional 8 men were given general or undesirable discharges, allowed to resign commissions, or relieved from active duty. Thus, of the 3,323 Army returnees, exactly 19—or 0·57 per cent—could be said to have been found guilty of the charges with which Kinkead and his Army informants identify "a majority" and by implication—because the "majority" is unidentifiable—all American POW's. Yet Kinkead quotes, unperturbed, one general's statement that "the last thing in the world we wanted was to prejudice, without due cause, the service careers or the future lives of any returnees. . . ."

If all this raises a serious question about the ease with which a supposedly experienced reporter was persuaded to become the blindfolded spokesman of a small group of Army officials, it prompts even more serious questions about the motives of this small group. Why would even one Army official be anxious to excuse and explain away the well-documented evidence of North Korean and Chinese Communist use of starvation, withholding of medical supplies, brutality, psychological pressure, and torture against American prisoners of war? Why this self-critical national insistence, at the expense of logic, fact, and even decency, on a G.I. burden of guilt?

I can suggest several answers. First, scapegoating by Army brass for its own clear errors of omission: a lack of adequate preparation of Army men for the experience of capture, a lack of education of the men as to the reasons for their presence in Korea, and the lack of a well-defined and clearly taught defence against psychological and physical pressures (the use of which against American POW's could surely have been foreseen from contemporary Chinese and Soviet Russian treatment of their own people).

Second, it is possible that these tactics represent a counter-attack by "old-fashioned disciplinarians" against the democratising of the Army which was recommended by the post-World War II Doolittle Board. Kinkead, for example, devotes an entire chapter to the ravings of an anonymous Army officer against these recommendations which "just about destroyed Army morale. . . ."

Third, the search for easy answers to complex questions is not necessarily an exclusively civilian preoccupation. Kinkead's book insists that the newly promulgated "Code of Conduct for Members of the Armed Forces" is an answer to the Korean POW experience. In fact, the Code is nothing more than a restatement of basic principles which every member of the armed forces since 1776 has accepted by implication on entering national military service. The only new element in it is an escape clause for the future POW which allows him, after giving name, rank, service number, and date of birth, to "evade answering further questions *to the utmost of my ability*. . . ." The Army, Kinkead reports, does not intend to allow its men the privileges even of this escape.

Perhaps the final irony of the Kinkead book lies in its similarity to two peculiarly Communist phenomena: self-criticism and indoctrination. Kinkead's authorities define indoctrination in terms of "repetition . . . harassment . . . humiliation. . . ." *In Every War But One* has made a rather efficient use of these techniques against the otherwise uninformed reader.

James Joyce

James Joyce. By RICHARD ELLMAN. *Oxford University Press.* 63s.

THE exhaustive school of American biography has not always been happy in its subjects and is frequently pedestrian in style, but in Joyce it has found the perfect figure. Professor Ellman has risen superbly to the task of telling us all. He has filled out the life of a man of genius down to the last cigarette; he has followed every distraction. We do not complain of innumerable passages like this, which describes Joyce's arrival from France during the war:

> On the next day, Dec. 15, they went on to Lausanne where they unpacked their bags for the first time at the Hotel de La Paix. Nora suddenly cried out: "Jim, look at this mess. There's green ink over everything." He had forgotten to fasten the top of the bottle properly. But now he lay on the bed in a dressing-gown, oblivious

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to her complaints, puffing at a cigarette and gazing at the ceiling.

For Joyce was always *en voyage* from room to room, flat to flat, country to country, the true exile living in his suitcase. The lines catch something essential in the whole life of a man who floated on a stream of trivia like a straw, the rudderless navigator of his stream of consciousness. Until he had finished *Finnegans Wake*, there was little of the detail of his life that Joyce did not use as a writer. He was fanatically, superstitiously exhaustive. Because of the controversies about his work, the artist crystallises too easily in our minds: in fact, artist and man are in mixed solution, and this is how Professor Ellman shows them. In a sense, Joyce is all on the surface, for despite his symbolism, his myth-making, and his odd vanity in thinking himself a prophet, he has the clever laugh of one liable to say it is all Maskelyne and Devant; he has the constantly spreading consciousness of a man learning one more language by ear, thinking of more words for the same things. He had the brain of a first-class scholar, the temperament of a player, the drastic courage of his genius; but does his emotional and imaginative range really go deeper than the longing and the unspoiled sentiment, the hail and farewell, that one meets in the lovely traditional Irish airs?

However this may be, Professor Ellman knows that Joyce was the cool, proud, fanatical artist, who despite his scornful and youthful desire to go for everything in life when he broke with Ireland, in fact never left family life. Without invention as a writer, he plunged into the known not the unknown, worked continually the same ground. He was the artist of the lowest common domestic denominator which he transposed so that it became myth. His imagination began with the word and met the thing later and returned to the word again. In words he was enclosed. He saw life as an illuminated pun. He was ready to believe at the beginning of the last war, for example, that there was some mystic connection between the resistance of Finland against Russia and the apotheosis of Finn in *Finnegans Wake*. Such fantasies kept at bay the boredom to which perhaps his isolation had exposed him; just as well to make no distinction between language and life. One has seen the same thing in other Irish writers—Beckett with his cries of "What tedium!"—whose gift of language knocks the intolerable minutes on the head. But when Jung said that Joyce was a classic case of the schizophrenic who successfully translated his obsessions into literature and saved his reason, and added that, as a psycho-analyst, he had learned a great deal from him, Joyce was pleased by the flattery, but laughed at Jung for making such heavy weather out of comic writing. Psycho-analysis was blackmail, he said, on many occasions. There was not a single serious line in *Ulysses*! What he meant was made clearer when he spoke of the attempt of the psychiatrists to cure his daughter's madness. What was the point of being cured when normality meant seeing the "battered cabman's face" of the world? Better madness! Better words!

THE figure that contained this unyielding artist was set in a lower key. The Joyce family have only too often the air of a broken-down touring company, often stranded, with Joyce himself keeping their spirits up like some Edwardian K-nut, by twirling his cane or giving them a sing-song. Like his father, he was born for debt, drink, and trouble with landladies; he was a cheerful exploiter of friends, getting rather more out of vulgar company than that of his peers, jaunty and, when he was rich, even flashy. Terrified of boredom, avid for change, he wrote best on the edge of the domestic precipice. Balzac's fertilising passion for debt arose from a gluttony for things. Joyce loved throwing money down the drain. He spent it wildly—five-pound tips in restaurants, fur coats for the women of his family if they felt upset—as an actor might, or to have the sensation of being on the move and to buy himself freedom from having to concern himself seriously with circumstance. He liked doggish behaviour. He liked negligence. One cannot blame a dedicated man who has lived in poverty, for bursting into absurd extravagance when the money came. The pain and the dilapidation into which this life landed him in his early days, were redeemed by some grace of gesture, by some saving courtesy or fantastic act. When he was famous his wife was bored by the intellectual company he was forced to keep and was continually at war with him about the drink that was ruining his health, but she said after his death very touchingly: "Things are very dull now. There was always something doing when he was about." A record has been kept of the kind of comic, scabrous, petulant, scholarly show he put on in his English classes at the Berlitz school in Trieste; it explains his popularity and also displays the intellectual superiority and sense of vocation to which the influential people of the city responded. No wonder he had patrons.

One can be so amused by Professor Ellmann's minute account of Joyce's picaresque career, that one has to jog oneself to remember that through all this time he was writing laboriously at the most original work of his time and making a major experiment with language. There is even the cold efficiency of genius in his profligacy:

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he was the profligate family man generating his chief subject. Family life existed to feed his art. The early enslavement of Stanislaus is one example; another, the peculiar insistence that Nora should be made to feel faithless because she had once been in love before she met him, so that Joyce could feel martyred, wronged, mistrustful, and exalted by one of his obsessional interests: the cuckolded husband; and there is the curiously passive attitude to his children and particularly to the gifted daughter who went mad and who was close to him intellectually. When the train that Nora and her children were travelling in was fired at in Galway during the Civil War, Joyce was certain—when he heard the news in France—that the shots were intended for him. And when the Irish Free State tried to coax him back to Ireland, he was sure he would be treated like Parnell. (So he almost certainly would have been.) He particularly feared some priest-driven fanatic would throw lime in his eyes—a horror natural to a man nearly blind—but the identification is that of a man living egocentrically, as a self-created myth in his own imagination. Joyce's courage, Joyce's rebellion, took him out of Ireland, but not into exile in Europe. He became far less of a true European than his brother Stanislaus who fought out the battles of academic liberalism and suffered in them. Joyce became a nomad among words.

In a long book, as animated as this one is, it is hard for the eye to settle for long on any single issue. One is struck, of course, by a number of small, piquant things: Joyce reading *Ulysses* aloud to the daughters of the Bulgarian consul in Trieste and censoring it on the grounds that it was unsuitable for young girls; Joyce giving up smoking until he had deprived the State of an amount of tax equal to what had been deducted in Income Tax. (One Tax Inspector had refused to tax him because he admired his work.) Above all, it is excellent to see Joyce turning trivia into story. After all the pretentious things about Joyce are said, for him or against, there remains this lovely ripple of perpetual story-telling. Among the larger well-known issues one is struck by what a triumph the actual publication of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* was. Joyce's personal triumph, of course, was a thing apart. But very great credit must also go to the firm, resourceful, and undaunted state of the liberal intellect in Europe and America in the period. The mind was indeed not then in chains. It was not then an out-voted member of a state committee. The battle in the courts was desperate but it was short compared with our still unfinished battle with the ideologists. The support of Joyce by small sums in his early

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period and eventually by very large sums of money from private purses, must be the last major efforts of patronage in our time; it was liberally given to an artist who was incomprehensible, experimental, of no interest to the great public and scandalous; and to a man who, though extremely industrious and dedicated, was also—from any respectable point of view—indifferent, careless, and hopelessly improvident. The conformist spirit of our over-organised society has been incapable of the exemplary fervour of the revolutionary generation that preceded it. The fervour is all the more remarkable when one reflects that if *Finnegans Wake* is not an aberration, but a work of significance, it is the funeral monument to a written culture. In it the grammarian abolishes language and slides into sound. In its written state *Finnegans Wake* has to be left to the horde of Alexandrian monks now tickling themselves to ecstasy with conundrums in our universities. Against this vulgar view, Professor Ellman makes the purely biographical suggestion that in moving into the subject of night-consciousness Joyce was performing one more act of personal therapy: he was leaving his life-long isolation and finding a union with human beings in the common, involuntary consciousness of sleep, where none are separate because none can choose what comes into their minds, where the trivia are absurd and where we are helpless in our own comedy.

With this idea in mind, are we to think of mass-culture as basically the great, common snooze? *Ulysses*, at any rate, might be the first novel of such a culture; it contains many elements one imagines to be congenial: the ordinary people, the lowest common denominator, and the element of myth which immediately becomes important when people doggedly refuse to protest against their own insignificance. The work is built up from the depths. What mass-culture we have, is essentially visual, oral, and dramatic; and *Ulysses* is a store of noises, of stage techniques, scenes, masks, disguises, soliloquies, and self-dramatisations. It goes directly to eye and ear and kills reflection. Again, the scene of the book is real and knowable; it celebrates—Professor Ellman's excellent word—the characteristic life of our time, the life of a large city. It is a book of shambling street lore. Whether, as it recedes into the history of literature, it will come to look like some extinct mastodon or a grammarian's orgy, whether it turns out to be the end of something or the beginning of something else, it will remain a fertilising and comic compendium. Even though, as many critics have said, it tells us nothing.

V. S. Pritchett

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I Am My Brother. By John Lehmann. *Longmans.* 25s.

An Occupation for Gentlemen. By Frederic Warburg. *Hutchinson.* 21s.

"Every successful publisher," I was once told by someone in the profession, "must know how to be a split personality—a businessman to his authors and a literary man to his printer." The quip has stuck in my mind but like other plausible generalisations does not easily fit individuals. For example, Mr. Warburg has always not so much alternated between the two roles as fused them. Mr. Lehmann was both poet and publisher but was he ever really a hard businessman? As for Sir Stanley Unwin, although he started work at fifteen, was he not spiritually born into the Establishment?

It has always seemed to me fitting that Mr. Warburg should have become the English publisher of Thomas Mann, because in personality he might have stepped out of *Buddenbrooks*. The implied question in his title is not quite the right one. A gentleman can turn his hand to anything. But should a young man from a solid upper-middle-class family whose sons went fairly automatically into banking, business, and the senior professions, have gone into a trade which (as Mann might have put it) was as *questionable* as publishing, involving contact with such *dubious* characters as writers, and leading so frequently to financial instability?

Mr. Warburg's book relates how through inborn restlessness and an education at, in that order, Public School, Passchendaele, and Oxford, he took this plunge. It brought him all one could have prophesied: long toil, contact with writers from Bertrand Russell and H. G. Wells to the unknown, a second marriage to a wife who painted and designed, who is exotic, pungent in her comment, and a born partisan; and also years of continuous crisis over minor sums not usually associated with the banking name of Warburg.

This, however, came later. In his early chapters Mr. Warburg tells how he joined the firm of Routledge and was apprenticed to his "Master," W. S. Stallybrass. There, in the 'twenties, he incidentally thought up that famous series of half-a-crown books, "To-day and To-morrow," starting off with Haldane, Russell, and Schiller, and probably still the best series of polemical pamphlets published in modern English.

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About the time of the Spanish Civil War, Mr. Warburg's restlessness caused him to leave Routledge and risk his small capital (and that of a new partner, Roger Senhouse) in establishing the firm of Secker & Warburg. His political sentiments were those of a rebel and he saw his firm as the voice of the genuine Left, that is, both anti-Fascist *and* anti-Communist. Between 1936 and 1940 he and Senhouse courageously published book after book (such as Kenyatta's *Facing Mount Kenya* and Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*) which spread this faith but did not really sell. It is at this point, at the outbreak of war in 1939, with himself in the role of struggling radical publisher, that Mr. Warburg ends his volume. Much has of course changed. Given Mr. Warburg's solid background, it was, I think, inevitable that he should eventually head a firm whose international standing is at once solid, progressive, and distinguished, with a list including Mann, Wells, Gide, and Orwell, Lewis Mumford, Lionel Trilling, and Angus Wilson. But this is the story for the promised second volume.

Mr. Lehmann, in his second autobiographical volume, takes up *his* publishing story in 1939-40. Is it criticism to say that in *I Am My Brother* he does inadequate justice to himself as publisher, or to be precise, as editor? He had been associated with Leonard and Virginia Woolf in the Hogarth Press. His lasting achievement (as older readers know and younger ones should) was that through his firm, and then through *Penguin New Writing*, he worked throughout the war to maintain a forum for creative literature, and especially for the younger poets and prose writers of England and Europe. In this, as retrospect makes all the clearer, Mr. Lehmann succeeded admirably. In this age of barren affluence it seems strange to think that, without journalistic concession, *Penguin New Writing* in wartime sold 80,000 copies a month and found its way to the lower-deck and the other-ranks mess.

One's impression on looking back is how good much of its material was and how many writers of unusual promise were first published by Mr. Lehmann. The lost wartime poets, Alun Lewis, Sidney Keyes, Demetrios Capetanakis, or a rare prose writer like Denton Welch—how thoughtful and dignified they seem now as we view them in their last unmoving pose. The main part in the movement was without doubt Mr. Lehmann's, as editor and inspirer. For this reason I think it a pity that he has not told it as a straight editorial story. In his book it is mingled with recollections of fragile wartime moods—and how difficult these are to re-create—and far too many and confusing references to personalities and party life. Yet his book convinced me that the time has surely come to issue an anthology of wartime poetry and prose.

Conversely, if *I Am My Brother* is taken as an essay in self-portraiture, the impression is that Mr. Lehmann is writing not enough as autobiographer and too much as publisher: he is too reticent, too polite, and the reader can therefore only feel that he is a more interesting person than he has here made out. For instance, Mr. Lehmann started out in 1939 with strong Left-wing political views which he clearly no longer held in the same form in 1945; but we are not told nearly enough about this. He recalls how he moved with detachment between literary and high social circles, but permits himself only an occasional irony about the latter. Above all, Mr. Lehmann was friend and critic to a generation of contemporary writers: Auden, Spender, Connolly, Green, Isherwood, Orwell, Pritchett—Mr. Lehmann must have known their shortcomings as well as talents and one waits for his considered criticism and evaluation, but it never comes. One hopes that in his next volume he will not hold back so much.

WITH Sir Stanley Unwin—how untypical all publishers are—we are in another world. *The Truth about a Publisher* is the type of autobiography whose appeal lies in strict professionalism and understatement. How familiar Sir Stanley's story sounds, how comforting to read: the Late Victorian childhood in a devout nonconformist family, with, as so often, a strict father and most unusual mother; the hero's early start in life as office boy; the broadening years of travel; the building of George Allen & Unwin into a firm with a household name. Sir Stanley is deliberately not concerned with self-expression, yet how clearly he expresses the spirit of a keener era where one could combine intellectual radicalism with the sober, continuous building of an organisation. As publisher he was brought into stimulating contact with the minds that questioned and shaped an age—Russell, Wells, Lowes Dickinson, Tawney, Nevinson, Hobhouse, Webb, and Laski, not to speak of Masaryk, Trotsky, Spengler, and Freud. He published the Fabians, and in the mornings walked regularly on Hampstead Heath with Ramsay Macdonald. At the same time, Sir Stanley is able to look back on world best-sellers, ranging from *Liza of Lambeth* to *The Way of an Eagle*, from *Ann Veronica* on her bicycle to Thor Heyerdahl on his *Kon-Tiki* raft. Sir Stanley's account of the technical promotion of the last-named is an object lesson in market research and business anticipation. It leaves no doubt, as he says somewhere, that he could easily have become a millionaire. His last chapters see him travelling the globe not merely

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for the firm but as ambassador and assured senior statesman of the British book trade. Sir Stanley recounts all this in a style which is terse and curiously appropriate:

> For some reason which I cannot pretend to explain, world wars stimulate an interest in Russian literature. We did our part in ministering to that demand....
>
> A problem which deeply concerned me and was uppermost in the minds of thoughtful people at that time was the future of Germany, and we published a number of books on the subject. Only second in importance was the question of self-government in India, a subject likewise reflected in our list....

Reading passages like these, I felt that they had a familiar tone, momentarily puzzling till I recognised the similarity. It might have been Lord Attlee writing about the administration of the United Kingdom, and not merely Sir Stanley about the affairs of Allen & Unwin.

T. R. Fyvel

Britain *v.* Europe

Europe Will Not Wait. By ANTHONY NUTTING. *Hollis & Carter.* 12s. 6d.

WE ARE now all beginning to realise the immensity of Britain's failure since the war to provide leadership for the new Western Europe which has grown up over those years. While we in Britain have been preoccupied with maintaining our national sovereignty and our prestige as a Great Power, clinging to dating illusions about the Commonwealth and our "special relationship" with the United States, practically everyone has been far too slow in realising what remarkable changes have been taking place across the Channel. There, in the heart of what was left of Europe to the west of the Iron Curtain, the younger and more radical forces in post-war society have been building something quite new. What they have been building is almost certainly not an old-fashioned Federal Union; nor is it merely a co-operation between national states; it is something between the two, which does not really fit into the categories of the textbooks. The nation continues as an individual cultural and political entity, but certain functions (at the moment, mainly economic) are being developed as the joint territory of national and supra-national organisations, operating together in a subtle and highly empirical fashion.

Mr. Nutting's book is an admirable analysis of Britain's failure to see that the biggest and most disastrous war in history has produced these qualitative (and not merely quantitative) changes in Europe's political structure. Rightly, he attacks both the post-war Labour and Conservative Governments for their failure to see what was happening and to give the lead which the continental Europeans so badly wanted us to provide. And he argues—again quite correctly—that our current policies towards Europe are at least as irrelevant to any sort of *rapprochement* with Europe as all the rest of our post-war policies. If we really do not want to count ourselves as part of Europe, but merely to be an island lying off its shores, then our present policies of trying to consolidate the "Outer Seven" of the Scandinavians and the traditional neutrals are perfectly sensible—just as all our other post-war policies towards Europe have been perfectly consistent with one another, if one accepts this basic assumption of semi-isolation. On the other hand our policies have certainly not been consistent with our repeated protestations that we belong to Europe.

Nor, to my mind, have our policies been consistent with the economic, political, and strategic realities of the situation. They have all been based on the "three circles" theory—the theory that we have special relationships with the United States, with the Commonwealth, and with Europe, and that we can only maintain our power and prosperity by maintaining all these links.

In a very broad sense this is, of course, true. But there is an immense amount of self-deception about the "three circles" theory. In his arguments for closer relationships with Europe, what I most miss in Mr. Nutting's book are attempts to show that the "special relationship" with the United States is nothing more than the fact that we happen to be her most powerful ally, and to show what our political relationships with the Commonwealth really amount to. He provides a useful analysis of our economic relationships with the Commonwealth, and argues that a much closer relationship with the Common Market would do very little harm to our trading relationships with the Commonwealth. An analysis of the nature of the Commonwealth as a political institution would almost certainly lead to the conclusion that a greater degree of political involvement in Europe would do no harm at all to our Commonwealth political links. In fact, I would have been happier if the argument had been developed more on these political lines; in his analysis of our Commonwealth trading relationships I do think that Mr. Nutting has overplayed his hand a little. In particular, there is the fact that Whitehall is unwilling to risk renegotiation of the Commonwealth Preference system as a whole because those countries which give us much the greater part of the total preferences we enjoy (notably Australia and New

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Zealand) believe they give us more in the way of preference than we give to them, while at the same time many of the other countries to whom we give some preference give us practically nothing in exchange, and seem most unlikely to offer us anything. Whitehall's fear is that the net effect of any renegotiation would work to our disadvantage—therefore it is best to keep as quiet as possible, even though it is realised that over the next decade or so, many of the remaining advantages of the system are likely to go. One of our problems is that if we disturb the Commonwealth preference system, we shall lose now the advantages which might otherwise take ten or fifteen years to erode away.

THIS DOES NOT, HOWEVER, do anything to destroy the merits of the main argument of the book. Nevertheless, I think there are two major weaknesses which are a good deal more serious. One is an understandable enough tendency to play party politics, and contrive to place a more than fair share of our blame for our post-war failures in Europe on the shoulders of the post-war Labour Government. The other weakness is that the author's own positive proposals for moving on from where we now find ourselves would in practice prove to be inadequate—like all the other compromises put forward by Britain since the war.

Mr. Nutting puts the great turning-point of our post-war failures towards Europe at the refusal to join the Coal and Steel Community in 1950, so placing the blame squarely on the shoulders of the Labour Government. Certainly, Labour does deserve a great deal of blame for its failures at that time and for its obsession with the Commonwealth and the American links. (Still more do the present Labour leaders deserve criticism for their failure to give any sort of radical lead on our relationship with Europe!) But two things deserve to be kept in mind. One is that there was an internal logic to Labour's position when it was in power (though not to-day)—they were obsessed by fears of food and raw material shortages (and therefore intent on securing our supplies from the Commonwealth and America), and they were tied to policies of detailed economic planning (which would not have been possible if we had been closely tied to a rather more *laisser-faire* Europe). The second thing to bear in mind is that the real date of the great rift was in the early years of the Conservative Government—a Government whose leaders out of office had been loud in proclaiming their desire for "a united Europe," and then as Nutting shows very fairly, wrecked the European Defence Community through their unwillingness to accept limitations on our sovereignty, even though almost all these limitations were accepted later, in order to achieve the much less worthwhile aim of an independent German membership of NATO. If the Conservatives had been willing to enter E.D.C., or even subsequently to approach the early stages of the Common Market negotiations in a serious state of mind, then Labour's failure to join the Coal and Steel Community would have meant nothing. The real misjudgments were those of Churchill and Eden—neither of them men capable of particularly sympathetic understanding of new political trends.

The positive proposals which Nutting puts forward (in very rough form) for moving ahead from where we now find ourselves are almost precisely the same as those he supported back in 1955; they are along the lines of Robert Boothby's Strasbourg Plan of 1952. This would provide for a fairly loose Commonwealth-European economic grouping, originally intended largely to deal with what was feared to be a perennial dollar shortage, and on the tariff front providing for a complicated (but workable) double-tier tariff system. Under it, Britain would allow Commonwealth goods to enter tariff-free, European goods to come in at a low tariff, and other goods at the high existing tariff.

I believe this kind of scheme was a starter in 1955—in fact I did a good deal of arguing for precisely such a scheme at that time. I certainly think it was more of a starter than the Industrial Free Trade Area proposals eventually chosen by the Cabinet, which suffered from an excessively neat tidiness of presentation which failed hopelessly to conceal an overwhelming concern with a narrow British self-interest. Not that I would go so far as Nutting in his belief that the Free Trade proposals were not a real starter at all—there was certainly something of a chance that they would succeed, and the whole episode did a great deal to educate British public opinion about European economic and political realities.

Where I am quite sure that Nutting is wrong, however, is to think that anything like the Strasbourg Plan is a starter now that the Rome Treaty of the Six has been signed and is rapidly changing the whole face of Europe, and that now America would object most bitterly (and effectively, since a GATT waiver would be needed) to any sort of deliberate ganging up against her exports, as was intended in the Strasbourg Plan.

What, then, of the other two possible policies, which are dismissed by Nutting? One is, put crudely, to wait for Adenauer to die and then hope to set up a Free Trade Area. Here I agree with Nutting; in international affairs events are

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"bigger than the men who create them and certainly more compelling than the influence of those who inherit them."

This leaves the third possibility—that Britain could sign the Rome Treaty and join the Common Market. Here, Nutting's argument is quite simply that "France would find a way to keep us out." This view is, I suggest with respect, nonsense—and none the less nonsensical for being often repeated. For one thing we must accept that if the French are as negative as all that, we can come to no significant arrangement of any kind with the Six—certainly not an arrangement for implementing the Strasbourg Plan, as Nutting suggests. In any case, it is important to realise that French businessmen are in general much more confident than they were a year or two ago; they have found that at a sensible exchange rate, they can compete with much more effect with Germany than they had expected—so why not with Britain too? But far and away the most important fact is that the French know perfectly well that the one thing that would certainly wreck the Common Market would be an attempt to exclude a European state which was willing to enter under the same rules as existing members. It was easy for France to exclude us from Europe when we tried (in the Free Trade Area scheme) to come in under our own carefully devised set of rules. Things would be very different if we said we would go in on the club's rules. In fact the whole tenor of this book leads to the conclusion that Britain's entry into the Common Market is a perfectly possible course of action, from the point of view of Britain and of the rest of the Commonwealth, and that such a close association with Europe is desirable. It is a great pity that as important a leader of radical opinion as Mr. Nutting should have refused the last fence, after showing so clearly how much harm has been done in the past by British refusal to take other fences.

Alan Day

Sages and Hucksters

Advertising: A New Approach. By WALTER TAPLIN. *Hutchinson.* 25s.

MORE than one Greek philosopher compared the possible lives of man to the three types of person who went to the Olympic Games: some to compete, some to watch, some to sell things to those who watched or competed. The Greek philosophers, gentlemen of independent means, found it easy, in evaluating these types of life, to put at the top those who watched and at the bottom those who sold. Not so the contemporary intellectual, for whom, in a society where his own and his fellow-citizens' welfare palpably depends on the prosperity of a consumer economy, the posture of the lofty sage is too embarrassing.

Yet the old disdain for the huckster is lurking somewhere, and finds its outlets, above all towards the advertisers; even if it is too much to run down in general those who produce and sell, those who merely sell are fairer game. This disdain is not pre-empted by any one political outlook; it can be equally part of a Left-wing dislike of advertising, a Radical distrust of it, or a High Tory contempt for it. The difference is that while the High Tory on the whole is forced merely to look in the other direction, since the party that he must (however unwillingly) call his is the hucksters' party, the Radicals and the Left-wing can look for reasons.

Moreover, they may find them. Even if the ultimate motive of their search is an atavistic distrust of the market-place, the distrust as applied to the advertisers may be well-founded. Even the well-disposed, indeed, have begun to worry, both about the economic effects of contemporary advertising, such as apparently unlimited want-creation, and about the tone given to society by its ubiquity, its reiteration of dubious claims, its systematic inflation of marginal or non-existent differences.

Thus the intellectual *vis-à-vis* commercial society can find real fuel for the old sage's furnace, even if he is embarrassed by a vague awareness that the old furnace is what it is. Others, however, characteristically react in the opposite direction. They are so embarrassed by the mere thought of the sage's superciliousness that they rush to the muddiest corner of the market-place and immerse themselves. Just as in politics there are intellectuals who revel more than most politicians in the knock-about of the hustings and the seamy texture of fixing and bargaining, so there are some, not themselves advertisers or business men, who find Life and Reality above all in the salesman's world.

After reading Walter Taplin's book, one might be excused for thinking that the "New Approach" mentioned in its title was precisely this, the Approach of Acceptance. "Don't be a squeamish fuddy-duddy," he seems to say: "this is life as it is lived, this is our world—stop fussing and take it." As an interpretation of Taplin's intentions, however, this would be a mistake. On the contrary, the novelty of the Approach is supposed to lie in its impartiality: Taplin claims that this book is not a polemical attack on or defence of advertising but an objective study of the problems that surround it. This claim is unsubstantiated.

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The book falls into two parts. In the first, and longer, part Taplin discusses such general questions as want-creation, the distinction (if any) between information and persuasion, and the morality of subliminal advertising. In the second part he gives some information, though not much, about the organisation of the advertising industry. None of the important issues raised in the first part is discussed at a level that really faces the difficulties. There is a clear example of this in Taplin's discussion of wants, and of what Galbraith and others have called "want-creation." Taplin starts by remarking correctly that the psychological and social facts here are enormously complex and not satisfactorily met by the abstract concepts of economic theory. He proceeds to contrast the present state of affairs in our society, of an increasing demand for consumer goods accelerated by advertising, with two possible "ideals" that might be opposed to it. He seems to think (quite absurdly) that these are the only conceivable alternatives. One is an ascetic, or puritan ideal, of "the simple life." This, he assures us, he does not want to disparage as an ideal, but he argues that it is unknown to or unshared by the vast majority of people and is in fact impracticable. The other ideal is that of reaching some point of "satisfaction" at which the increase in the material standard stops; this again, he argues, is impracticable, and would involve an arbitrary attempt to put a stop to an unceasing development and change which is essential to humanity.

GRANTED THE IMPRACTICABILITY of these ideals, he argues, two things follow. First, the constant development of new material wants is inevitable. Second, since the psychological facts are so complicated and obscure, there is no better way of this development's happening than the way it does happen in our society, by people making things and trying to get other people to buy them by advertising; after all, he says, people are free not to buy things if they don't want to, and any attempt to interfere with the process and guide it in some other direction would involve gross and gratuitous presumptions about what people "really" want. Thus it appears—though Taplin does not put the conclusion quite explicitly—that the present workings of the market correspond to the facts of human nature.

This argument totally misses the point of Galbraith's or any similar position, which is not to oppose to the present state of affairs a society which does not develop, but one that develops in a different way. Moreover, it does not seek an alternative which imposes on people what they do not want, but an alternative which gives people more of things which they do want in a consumer economy but progressively tend not to

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get. These are things such as decent public services and an acceptable standard of town planning and amenity. These are wants which cannot be translated into choices as simply as the wants for things that can be advertised and bought over a counter. Nevertheless they exist.

Similarly with the strength of wants. For the advertiser, the strength of wants can be measured only in terms of effective demand, *i.e.*, by what people will pay for something in the existing economic situation. This is notoriously inadequate, because people can very much want either things which they cannot in fact pay for, though other individuals can (as old-age pensioners want holidays); or which no individuals can pay for, though the state can (such as town-planning); or which no one could in any direct sense pay for at all, though economic planning is relevant to them (such as an easing of social tension). It is only by *already* accepting the advertiser's notion of a want that one can ignore these wants as real wants, and fail to consider the question whether economic resources should not be diverted to them from the advertising economy.

The questions of wants and of want-creation are undoubtedly complex and insufficiently explored. But it is, anyway, clear that we do and must have a notion of a "want" that goes beyond that of a want expressed in an individual purchase; one could not even start to talk about society without going further, whether it be at the relatively humdrum level of wants for public services, or the more elusive wants involved when we speak—as we surely can speak—of a society or some section of a society being "dissatisfied." As soon as one goes further, one sees that the wants that the advertiser characteristically serves or creates are only a fraction of actual or possible wants, and the question of the social and economic importance to be given to these is entirely open to discussion—a discussion which Taplin tries to avoid altogether.

This is just one central example of how Taplin skates over the important issues. He skates so much, in fact, that as a work about advertising, his book offers little ground for discussion. What strikes one about the book is not so much what it says about advertising, as the devices employed in saying it. The book offers, however unintentionally, an impressive display of Acceptance Ploys in action. One or two are worth a closer look.

For instance, confronted with the Plain Man's World, the Acceptance theorist can cover a lot of ground by being a Plain Man just as often, and for as long as, he likes. This is well illustrated by a certain dialectical device which Taplin uses over and over again. It is a verbal equivalent of the two-headed penny, and works like this: if your opponent urges some distinction against you (for example, if the critics of advertising suggest that informative advertising should be distinguished from persuasive, and the latter discouraged), you say: "The distinction you are drawing is extremely imprecise and vague; it cannot ultimately be pressed; where are we to draw the line?" etc. If, on the other hand, your own account of some matter is very superficial and imprecise, and you are criticised for this, you say: "Away with all these academic subtleties! Of course in practical matters distinctions cannot be pressed too far; the plain man knows where to draw the line," etc. The other man's necessary imprecision is always a muddle; your own muddle is always necessary imprecision.

Again, there is the device of nonchalantly relying on some rather refined form of argument and, by complacently apologising for its subtlety, distracting attention from the question of the argument's validity. Thus Taplin lays a good deal of weight on what he seems to regard as a rather fancy piece of reasoning designed to show that "in real life it is very difficult, if not impossible, to separate information from persuasion." "The mere offer of information by person A implies the suggestion that some other person B should pay attention to it rather than do something else. . . . In other words A is trying to persuade B . . . in giving information at all, A is trying to persuade B, or somebody else, or everybody, to spend some time receiving that information."

This is a rubbishy piece of sophistry. Even if we accepted the argument, itself fallacious, that any piece of information is designed to persuade somebody or other *not already so disposed* to pay attention to it, it still would not follow that we could not distinguish, in the relevant sense, between informative and persuasive advertising; we could still distinguish—which is what matters—between announcements merely designed to persuade people to attend to the information they contain, and those designed to persuade them to *buy* something.

It is hard to believe that any moderately alert reader would be convinced by such stuff. The characteristic thing is that Taplin himself, on the surface, appears not to mind whether we are convinced or not. Some might regard the argument, he continues, "as possibly true but unduly refined." Yet Taplin reverts to the argument, and relies on it, refined or not.

This curious and dangerous oscillation between intellectual and non-intellectual discussion, between "refined" analysis and bluff assertion, is very characteristic of a certain approach to "practical" questions. It can often

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be produced by, and influence, people who are ashamed of seeming sage-like or supercilious in face of the practical world. Parallels could certainly be found in politics for this guilt-driven self-mutilation of the intellect.

The book might be rather less distressing if it were just meant as a brisk piece of journalism. But it bears at least a trace of graver intellectual pretensions. Taplin is Research Fellow in Advertising and Promotional Activity at the London School of Economics. He describes this book only as a "by-product" of his research activities; nevertheless one might expect to find in it some kind of academic approach to the subject. One does not. This may be because he has thoroughly abandoned academic clothing in investigating the business world. Alternatively, it may be because his position is rather an outpost of the business world in academic life. (It is financed by the Advertising Association, and what appears to have been the first announcement of its foundation was, rather oddly, made by Lord Luke to a conference of that Association at Brighton.)

However this may be, and at whatever level Taplin means his book to be taken, it can be seen as a sharp warning against the Acceptance Neurosis. Embarrassed theorists hastening to the business embrace may see from it into what, dazzled by the neon lighting, they might fall.

Bernard Williams

We note with sorrow the death of Boris Pasternak; *he was the greatest Russian master of our time, and both his literary achievement and personal example will remain unforgotten.*

FROM THE OTHER SHORE

"In the Land of Shakespeare & Burns"

The *Literary Gazette* has already reported that K. A. Fedin and A. T. Tvardovsky recently visited England on an invitation from the British Council—an official organ of the British Government in charge of propaganda and cultural liaison with foreign countries. On their return home the two writers recounted their trip at a meeting of the Secretariat of the U.S.S.R. Writers' Union. Fedin remarked that he and Tvardovsky had gladly accepted the invitation from the British Council having in mind the need for a further broadening of creative contact between Soviet and English writers.

"The British Council," said Fedin, "made it possible for us to see the sights of London, to visit Oxford and Cambridge, Stratford-on-Avon and Edinburgh, as well as museums, theatres, and places associated with Shakespeare and Burns. And even though we arrived between terms, when most university students were away on excursions and only an occasional professor was to be seen crossing the lawn of his college quad (a privilege reserved for professors only), this did not affect the full and variegated programme offered us by our hosts."

Tvardovsky added some interesting details to the account of this first part of their programme: "I wish, first of all, to say something about Stratford-on-Avon where Shakespeare's house is preserved as a shrine. This house, with its blackened beams and heavy flagstones made a tremendous impression on us. I also remember the ancient town of Edinburgh which appeared as if carved out of rock; and particularly do I remember the great city of London where we were introduced to the magnificent National Gallery, the Royal Opera House, and the new Festival Hall where we attended a concert dedicated to the works of Mozart, Bach, and Stravinsky."

Speaking about the so-called "non-literary" part of his stay in London, Tvardovsky mentioned his visit to Parliament where he was received by Emrys Hughes, M.P.

During three whole weeks the Soviet guests were daily meeting numerous English writers of different literary movements, publishers, and representatives of various English intellectual circles. On several occasions they had talks with Sir Charles Snow, a notable prose writer, and with his wife, the authoress Pamela Hansford Johnson.

This report on the recent journey to Britain by Konstantin Fedin, first secretary of the Soviet Writers' Union, and Alexander Tvardovsky, editor-in-chief of Novy Mir, *was published in the Moscow* Literaturnaya Gazeta *on 14th May.*

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"Charles Snow, a venerable and very popular English novelist, author of a trilogy on the life of English scientists and students, impressed us with his pleasant character and absence of all prejudice," said Fedin. "He invited us to his home and gave us a warm welcome."

"This visit," remarked Tvardovsky, "was dear to us also because at an early stage of our contact we felt a certain similarity in our views on literature and realism. We discovered a mutual sympathy towards the literature of the other's country. C. P. Snow confessed that already in his youth he came under the influence of the great Russian writers and literary critics. He gave precedence among the latter to Belinsky who had, according to him, a singularly developed æsthetic sense. Having stressed that he is 'overmuch indebted to Russian literature' Snow remarked that 'Tolstoy and Chekhov these are the gods.' He also highly praised the works of Turgenev, Leskov, and Dostoyevsky."

In London, before seeing C. P. Snow, the Soviet writers visited the Tate Gallery with its magnificent collection of English paintings and European masters; a gallery which, regrettably, pays much too high a tribute to life-destroying abstractionism. The conversation with C. P. Snow naturally touched upon this too.... Lady Pamela firmly suggested leaving this subject well alone, but the master of the house held a different view.

"As far as literature is concerned," said Sir Charles, "the superiority of realism is fairly obvious to me. In the graphic arts, however, much is as yet seen but darkly, and God alone knows what we are to make of it."

All the same, neither this nor certain other issues prevented the two sides from agreeing on the necessity for a closer contact between Soviet and English painters, or that there is an ever-increasing interest shown in England towards Soviet Russian culture....

The inseparable interpreter attached to the Soviet writers was Peter Norman—an Englishman, a pilot in the last war, now a teacher of Russian language and literature. Fedin and Tvardovsky familiarly christened him Pyotr Petrovich. He knew Russian to perfection and recited from memory verses of Pushkin and Lermontov—and not just those which are widely known from school-textbooks, but those which are only familiar to the true lovers of Russian poetry. This indefatigable and informative guide never missed an opportunity to learn from his charges about the latest achievements in Moscow art, stage, and screen. This was a perpetual subject for enquiries directed at Fedin and Tvardovsky wherever they went.

This growth of interest concerning Soviet literature and its masters is reflected in "the case of Burns," as it is known in London.

"On several occasions," said Tvardovsky, "we heard from Russian-speaking Englishmen that having read Burns in our language they experienced in a novel fashion all the greatness of this outstanding Scottish poet. According to them, the wide popularity enjoyed by the works of Burns in the Soviet Union owes much to the magnificent translations of them by Marshak...."

The Soviet guests naturally travelled to Scotland, Burns' native land, where they visited the famous memorial house of the poet. This, quite unexpectedly, created "a real social turmoil" as Tvardovsky facetiously puts it.... Inside the house-museum of Burns, the Soviet guests noticed that the poet's manuscripts were displayed under glass —in the original. This, naturally, subjected them to the dangerous effects of sunlight and changes of temperature. The earliest folios of Shakespeare are exhibited in Stratford-on-Avon in a similar fashion.

"We pointed out to our gracious hosts that this method of preservation of such priceless relics is hardly in line with the present-day techniques and that it would clearly be more appropriate to restrict the access to the originals and to exhibit only their photographic reproductions," elucidated Tvardovsky. "And although the press came afterwards with a statement by a keeper-expert to the effect that the Russian guests have somewhat exaggerated the danger, we feel that our warning did not fall on deaf ears."

Another example of the growing interest in England towards Soviet Russian culture is the activity of the "Pushkin Club" in London. (Incidentally, the creation of this club was quite erroneously attributed by *Literatura i Zhizn* to the "initiative of Surkov." It was, in fact, founded by Russians permanently residing in London.)

"It is a touching hearth of Russian culture in England," said Tvardovsky, "even if it does have a semi-private character. The club, which is supported by voluntary contributions, jealously preserves a library and painstakingly collects Russian editions. We spent a memorable evening there. A part of the club's membership consists of Russian émigrés. Especially active are the 'second-generation' émigrés through whom the English have a chance of becoming acquainted with Russian speech. And it is they who, incidentally, provide some good translators and reviewers. We did witness, however, some shocking transformations there. This or that person would suddenly assume in our eyes the form of an inveterate cosmopolitan, a dealer whose sole interests are pounds and dollars. All the same, we were glad to meet there with those Russians," said Tvardovsky, "who work to the best of their ability in the worthy cause of *rapprochement* between the Soviet and the English peoples."

THIS "problem of *rapprochement*" was "subject No. 1" in the talks between the Soviet and English writers.

"Most indicative in this respect was the meeting with the well-known English writer and editor Stephen Spender with whom," said Fedin, "I became acquainted as far back as 1956 at a meeting organised in Venice by the European Cultural Society. Already then Spender revealed himself a keen polemicist. This very popular English writer told us that he visited the U.S.S.R. not long previously and that our country made a big impression on him. During our stay in London we exchanged with him opinions on various problems of contemporary literary practice."

"With respect to various literary problems,"

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added Tvardovsky, "Spender expressed also some very (in our opinion) strange views. For instance, he asked us: 'Do you really think that your Soviet literature is as brilliant as the Russian literature of the 19th century?" We replied to our dear host that we are hardly such simpletons as to hold such views. In no stage of its development did Russian literature think about itself on this plane. At the same time the word uttered by Soviet literature belongs to it alone and this word was not and indeed could not have been uttered by anyone but itself."

Having listened to this rejoinder Stephen Spender replied: "Perhaps we are unjust towards you; as it is we do not know you so well. . . ."

"The truth is," continued Tvardovsky, "that Soviet literature is not, so far, sufficiently well known in England, just as our Soviet readers are as yet very inadequately acquainted with contemporary English literature. In this connection we should mutually supplement our knowledge. If one were to draw a line which would circumscribe the knowledge English readers have of Russian poetry the line would end at Blok. As it is, Stephen Spender spoke about Blok's celebrated poem *The Twelve*, comparing it with T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* which he, Spender, considers 'the masterpiece of the poetry of the 20th century.' We remarked that in comparing these two poems one should bear in mind that Blok did welcome the revolution, even if he did so in a very personal way, while Eliot speaks of a 'waste land' brought to the world by revolutionary social upheavals.

"This brief clash convinced us that before engaging in a dispute we should learn to know each other better," remarked Tvardovsky. "Spender, in full sympathy with this view, proposed to organise a seminar with the participation of a group of young writers of both countries, as well as of masters of the older generation. This excellent initiative has, by the way, been also approved by the British Council. Our young writers could, without undue haste, prepare themselves for the seminar in the course of the next twelve months. This forthcoming seminar may be the first practical result of our journey.

"THE other result concerns me in my capacity as chief editor of the magazine *Novy Mir* ('New World'). . . ."

Stephen Spender together with Melvin J. Lasky publish in London the magazine ENCOUNTER ("Vstryecha") and a preliminary agreement for an exchange of material has been reached between the editorial boards of the two magazines.

The Soviet writers also met the venerable author Sir Compton Mackenzie, who enjoys a wide popularity among Scottish readers, and who, at the age of seventy-seven is the author of some 78 books. . . They had moving meetings with Jack Lindsay, John Aldridge, and other English authors well known to Soviet readers. Aldridge, while entertaining his guests at home, decided to treat them to some home-made coffee and this reminded Tvardovsky of an incident in the novel *Hunter* when the hero is preparing a roast from perch and musk-rat. . . .

"I have only just finished a novel dealing with the recent events in Suez," John Aldridge told his guests. "My next job is a book in the writing of which I should like to ask for your help. The novel will be about the conquest of the Arctic. It deals with the meeting of two heroes—one English, one Soviet. And even if they represent two different social worlds it does not mean that one is bad and the other good—both are fine men. I would, consequently, like to ask the Soviet Writers' Union for assistance in obtaining permission to take part in one of the Soviet expeditions into the Arctic. . . . Meanwhile, I shall again go for a rest with my family to the Soviet Union. After a spell on the shores of the Black Sea, back to work."

Fedin and Tvardovsky promised to assist Aldridge in the realisation of his plan.

The Soviet writers held mutually profitable business discussions with English publishers. C. P. Snow is thinking of launching an edition of Soviet authors, and the very same idea was propounded by the Manager of Macmillan & Co. (who happens to be the son of the British Prime Minister) and by the representatives of Heinemann, Hutchinson, and others. Let us hope these discussions will bear fruit.

"We were received in England with warm and open hearts," summed up Tvardovsky. "We can but gratefully acknowledge how, in such a short time, our hosts succeeded in making it possible for us to acquaint ourselves with the different aspects of English culture, with its shrines and treasures, and to establish contact with its writers."

"I fully share the feelings of Tvardovsky," said Fedin, "and think it necessary to note that our journey was fruitful. And by the way, the welcome reception given us, as well as my personal observations, have shaken my belief in English reserve. Amongst themselves they are temperamental and impulsive. At the concert we saw an audience of some three thousand seized by sheer rapture. In Stratford-on-Avon, at a performance of *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (an excellent production, unjustly censured by the London press) laughter accompanied every action on the stage. . . . And finally our personal meetings and talks were sincere, straightforward, and full of mutual respect. The long-awaited Spring is arriving in the relations between our two literatures. Spring has vigorously invaded the life and the relations amongst all peoples.

"One of the incontrovertible symptoms of this Spring is the expressed desire by many of our English colleagues to visit the Soviet Union. We can shortly expect Sir Charles Snow and his wife Lady Pamela Hansford Johnson. Sir Compton Mackenzie is also contemplating visiting the U.S.S.R. J. B. Priestley, whom we also met in London, spoke in the same vein. . . . We shall be glad to welcome them in our own homes and return their hospitality."

Fedin stressed in conclusion that the more frequent the meetings between the writers of different countries and peoples, the more alive and fruitful their creative activity.

This is why we join the two recent guests of English literators in hailing our English guests-to-be with "Welcome!"

N. Mar

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LETTERS

Kennan

In his conversation with M. J. Lasky, Mr. G. F. Kennan sketches a picture of Lenin which, even in the Marxist-Leninist view, is a gross distortion of Lenin: it was only after long hesitation and with heavy heart that he decided to resort to political terror—the Bolshevik movement was forced towards terror and brutality by a remarkable chain of events which suddenly brought them to power.... Faced with this kind of canonisation of Lenin, the Soviet Leninist as well as the observer caught up in a false "objectivism" would agree that Kennan's interpretation of Lenin's mind and the events of 1917 is not truly a very valuable contribution. It is not difficult to prove—and one would think that this has happened often enough—(1) the extent to which Lenin was bound to the teachings of Nechayev and Tkachev and anti-Tsarist terrorism; (2) that Lenin himself felt no scruples about the use of terroristic means and confessed as much as early as 1908; (3) that the "compulsion to terror" is a fiction of Mr. Kennan and constitutes a ridiculing of the young Russian republic and its Liberal, Social-Revolutionary, and Menshevik representatives.

Vienna Dr. Kurt Marko

The question which Dr. Marko raises is not an easy one; and despite the sharpness of his remarks, I shall refrain from any polemical reply. It is, to be sure, not easy to prove that Lenin decided "with heavy heart" to exercise political terror. It is also not easy to prove that he did so particularly happily; rather the contrary, because it is a fact that he did not resort to such methods to any considerable extent until after the outbreak of revolts in Siberia, and after the landings of Allied troops in Northern Russia. Had he acted out of some personal addiction to cruelty, or out of a devotion to terroristic methods, then he probably would not have waited so long. The truth surely lies somewhere in the middle—between my badly chosen words, and Dr. Marko's apparent belief that Lenin was ideologically and psychologically committed to the use of terror. May I add, too, that one is not "canonising" Lenin when one calls attention to the fact that he only had resort to terror when he thought it politically necessary. I only stated what I thought to be a fact. I did not say that I either supported or approved of Lenin's decision.

George Kennan

The Institute for Advanced Study,
Princeton, New Jersey

One Man, One Vote

In your March issue neither Irving Kristol nor Richard Wollheim interpreted the intricate relationship between democracy and limitations upon the suffrage correctly.

If, as Kristol maintains, democracy is compatible with limitations of the suffrage on grounds of political incompetence, then Plato's Republic is not hostile to democratic political theory. This is obviously absurd. It may sometimes be legitimate to exclude political incompetents from power, but when this is done democracy itself has been restricted or abandoned.

But democracy does not stand or fall, as Wollheim supposes, on the assumption that in politics one man's opinion is as good as another's. If it did, democracy would be a lost cause.

I believe democracy depends on two main principles which can be upheld in spite of inequality in political competence among men. The first is that every person should have access to institutionally-organised sources of power (like the vote and freely-formed associations) in order to ensure that his interests cannot be ignored with impunity by his rulers. The second is that every citizen should have an opportunity to express ideas that might eventually influence governmental decisions (via freedoms of speech, press, and assembly, and the *right to petition*).

When minors and criminals are deprived of the vote these principles are not sacrificed. The exclusion is temporary. When the minor turns 21, when the criminal serves his sentence, both receive the vote.

It would be a different matter if women, or the property-less, or the uneducated, were disenfranchised. Then democracy itself would have been restricted. There is no difficulty in expressing this theoretically. Democracy is realisable in degrees. From this standpoint the U.S. was more democratic after 1919, when it conferred the vote upon women, than it was before that date.

Wollheim was right, however, to suppose that democrats have to make some assumptions about "human nature" in order to uphold the two principles mentioned above. They need not assume that all men are equally competent in politics. What they have to assume is that in every man there is a *spark* of competence, a potentiality for reaching at least a minimal level of intelligence and sense of responsibility, *and* that in every man there is also a tendency to err and to use power badly. For, as Reinhold Niebuhr once said, it is the latter that makes democracy necessary; it is the former that makes it desirable.

At this point the status of the feeble-minded and the insane can be considered. They are denied civic rights because they are so abnormal that the above generalisations about human nature are totally inapplicable to them. But a democrat is distinguished, among other things, by his unwillingness to treat the generality of men as if in any way comparable to those who are grossly and obviously abnormal.

Jay Blumler

Ruskin College
Oxford

I am in substantial agreement with Mr. Jay Blumler—though he, I see, thinks he is not with me. The fault may lie with my exposition of my own position. [Encounter, March.]

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I do not hold it to be a principle of democracy that in any political issue one man's opinion is as good as another in the sense that *one man's opinion is as correct as another's*. Such a principle would, given the conflict of political opinion, make democratic theory self-contradictory: for the democrat would be committed to holding that of two incompatible opinions both were true.

My submission was that according to democratic theory one man's opinion is considered as good as another's in the sense that *all are to be treated equally or regarded as worthy of the same respect.* And this view follows from the rejection of expertise in political judgment. (Of course, democracy allows that ruling or statesmanship admits of expertise: Irving Kristol distorts my argument when he takes me as denying this obvious fact.)

I think that Blumler's first principle coincides with my principle, save that he attaches to it a justification of democracy: namely, that democracy safeguards the "interests" of the ordinary citizen, which I take to be part, but only part, of the story. Blumler's second principle is, I would argue, a consequence of mine. For, since democracy is committed to an impartial hearing of all opinion, democracy is also committed to maintaining the conditions upon which opinion (as opposed to prejudice) depends for its existence: in other words, democracy could not operate without "freedom of speech, press, and assembly."

Incidentally, I think it *fantastic* to define, as Kristol did in his reply to me, democracy in terms of "equality and liberty under the rule of law." Not all good things are one.

RICHARD WOLLHEIM

University of London

Auschwitz

CONSTANTINE FITZGIBBON'S observations on Auschwitz and its Commandant I found disturbing, not for the obvious reasons, but because, in spite of the many similarities between Nazi horrors and the Communist ones I found myself wanting to argue for the differences between the two. Why? Because of Left Wing sympathies? But I didn't react this way when I read *The Dark Side of the Moon*, a book which T. S. Eliot prefaced, which dragged the depths of the miseries and inhumanities of Soviet prison camps. No, I think it was because in Fitzgibbon's writing I saw an attempt, unconscious or perhaps deliberate, to prove that both were identical, and without reference to anywhere else in the world.

If he had set out to write about this kind of thing and had mentioned examples in Japan or Algeria or elsewhere I should not feel so critical but, as it stands, the article gave me something of the feeling I got when I read the M.R.A. mass-advertising. That this, in spite of all it pretends to the contrary, is no more than "anti-Red-ism."

This only takes us deeper and deeper into the mire. If the Soviet leaders have reverted to Czarist barbarism in their reaction from the morality of the Western states this is no cause for us to insist that there can be no common moral standard between them and us.

The task before both the Soviets and the West European family of nations is to complete the destruction of the false morality on which the Nazis built their power and strengthen the forces which in the long run must impel the Soviet peoples towards an acceptance of the basic "true" morality of Western civilisation. While this is not to be done by ignoring Soviet barbarisms, and while the comparisons in such articles might conceivably have a useful effect on the few Russians who are permitted to read them, the general result is still of doubtful value.

Like the philosophy of the deterrent it has a congealing and stagnating value, but little more. In the meantime, what is happening to people?

JOHN WRIGLEY

Otley, Yorks

WERE I quite clear as to what the point is that Mr. Wrigley wishes to make, I should find it easier to answer his letter. But I shall do my best, nonetheless. He thinks to see in my article on Auschwitz's Commandant an attempt to prove that Russian and German (or, more exactly, Communist and National-Socialist) concentration camps were and are identical, and states that he would find this a more acceptable point of view if camps in Japan, Algeria, etc., were included in this category.

In discussing concentration camps, it seems to me that two important distinctions must be made. First, there is, to put it crudely, the distinction between wartime and peacetime camps. In order to shorten or end a war, many horrors are, if not excusable, at least comprehensible within the framework of our practical morality. On the other hand the Nazi and Soviet camp systems existed and exist not as horrible temporary measures, but as permanent institutions, as part of the state structure, in order to terrorise those outside the camps into complete political passivity. In so far, they are identical in purpose. In so far as both systems produced or produce very large quantities of misery and corpses, they are identical in practice. This does not mean that Communism and Nazism are identical. It does mean that both systems reject and despise some of the most important human rights for which Western civilisation stands.

A second distinction is one that is far more difficult to draw, in that it is one of size. Though the Pacific Ocean is, in some respects, identical with a rock-pool, by reason of its size it is clearly a phenomenon of a very different order. Monstrous and disgusting as were the reports from Hola a year or so ago, to compare that place with Auschwitz or Karaganda is to lose all sense of proportion. Furthermore, though the British Government made pitiful and unsuccessful attempts to whitewash its subordinates at Hola, it must be generally agreed that Hola was not typical of British administrative methods, was in fact an exception. Camp terror, on the other hand, is essential to all totalitarian régimes, and may indeed be said to be their hallmark.

We do not, thank heavens, share the false morality of the Nazis and Communists: they, quite

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clearly, despise ours. From our point of view the men who organise mass murders are criminals. From their point of view we are fools not to do likewise. We believe that we represent, inadequately enough, humanity pursuing its lawful ends, while they are law-breakers in the deepest sense. In the 1920s an attempt was made to synthesise the morality of the law with the codes of the law-breakers, in Al Capone's Chicago. It was not a success.

CONSTANTINE FITZGIBBON

London

On the Movies

IT SEEMS to me that there is a fundamental error in the somewhat involved and contradictory article by Nicola Chiaromonte, on what he calls "The Movies" [ENCOUNTER, March]; such abstract ratiocination may be all very well for the moral philosopher to cut his teeth on, but where the film as an Art is concerned, it is really beside the point.

Books have been written on the congruence or disparity between "real time" and "Film time"; but in fact the distinction is a false one, because Art creates its own time; a film made with cohesion, drive, and aptness to the medium, though it may last for two hours, will still seem to be a "shorter" film than a three-reel documentary that drags its feet.

What Mr. Chiaromonte seems to be getting at is that the "quality" of emotion experienced by someone seeing a film, is not to be compared with the emotions experienced by someone listening to a Mozart Sonata, or looking at a Giotto fresco, or reading *Anna Karenina*—"Catharsis . . . does not take place," he says.

The use of the Aristotelian term gives a clue as to the error, which is surely that he is not comparing like with like, for he has made one significant omission, he does not compare the "Movies" to the Theatre. Almost everything he says about the evanescence of the action in a film, can be applied with equal justice—or lack of it—to the action in a play.

In so far as a theatre audience and a cinema audience are both "onlookers" at the Drama taking place before them, the validity of the experience is in direct proportion to the sense of involvement in the joys and sufferings of the participants in the action; in other words, does "Identification" take place?

The comparison to Ballet is singularly inappropriate because the pleasure in that sphere is more an appreciation of formal beauty and abstract pattern, than an emotion of human sympathy. That does not mean that Ballet is unworthy of critical esteem because it is "different from reading a novel."

Literature has its joys for the tone-deaf, as indeed music has for the colour-blind—it is no slur on the Cinema, the youngest of the arts, that it has not thrown up figures of such enduring greatness as the other arts, although it would need a very elaborate critical apparatus to extinguish the claims of Eisenstein to a seat amongst the immortals.

Incidentally, he refers to the "famous shot on the staircase" in *Potemkin*, when he obviously means the whole "Sequence" on the steps of the Palace in that film, which is a classic, possibly "the" classic demonstration of a powerful emotional climax obtained in cinematic terms unique to film by a virtuoso technique of intercutting *many* shots. If "the meaning of the facts" is not forever etched on the memory by that scene, by what went before, and what after, then indeed the Film can never claim to be anything more than an amusing peep-show.

What is so different in this impression left in the mind of a perhaps more or less vague idea of the whole with particular memories of particular climaxes, to the impression left by a novel, a play, or a symphony?

One could contest almost every statement in the article, but Chiaromonte appears to negate his own case when he concludes by referring to the pictures in *Life*. These "stills" may or may not "bring the World to us," but what is in no doubt is that the flow of images in a movie is a very different thing. If, in fact, instead of being brought to us, the world has been successfully "gotten out of our system," does not that mean, in fact, that catharsis has taken place? That life has been transformed by Art? And the physical limitations of Time and Space been transcended by the Imagination?

OLIVER BECKETT

Troubadour Film Productions, Ltd.
London

CONCERNING what Mr. Beckett considers my "significant omission" of the theatre, I think it would be difficult indeed to prove that "action" means the same thing in *Antigone* as in *Potemkin*. The whole point about the movies, it seems to me, is that action there coincides entirely with meaning; while it would be far-fetched to say that the meaning of a dramatic action coincides with the plot even in such mechanical contrivances as *La Dame aux Camélias* or *Tea and Sympathy*. On this point, may I refer Mr. Beckett to Francis Fergusson's book on *The Idea of a Theatre*? May I also draw his attention to the fact that, no matter how heavily based on plot and external incident, a play never coincides with its performance, while a movie always and inherently does, any distinction between script, acting, and directing being impossible in the finished product? In fact, the film is farther from the theatre than from the novel, since a film might conceivably be a substitute for story-telling, but can never be the equivalent of a drama performed by players who are actually present on a stage, and actually watched by an audience. Reproducing a real action is, in any case, a quite different affair from representing the meaning of an imaginary one, which is what the theatre does.

NICOLA CHIAROMONTE

Tempo Presente,
Rome

Déry, Hay, *et al.*

IT WAS with pleasure and satisfaction that we have learned of the release recently of Tibor Déry, Gyula Hay, and some other distinguished Hungarian writers and scholars. We wholeheartedly wish that they will be able to resume their creative

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work in good health. Under the impression that the recent international *detente*, played a substantial part in this amnesty, we can only hope that it will be followed up by similar steps. The release of those who have been included in the present amnesty must not, of course, allow world opinion to forget about the fate of those Hungarians still kept in gaol for political reasons, amongst whom such prominent figures of our intellectual life are still to be found as István Bibó, József Gali, Gyula Obersovszky (and many others). Our Association, whilst asking everybody to follow their fates with attention, expresses

Out of Apathy?

AT EVERY *point the way out of apathy leads us outside the conventions within which our life is confined. Out of* NATO. *Out of the "mixed economy." Out of the acquisitive ethos.*

It is because the conventions themselves are being called in question, and not the tactical manœuvring which takes place within them, that the gulf which is opening between the young socialist generation and traditional Labour politicians is so deep.

We must guard against the specious appeal to morality, the posing of "values" outside the context of power. "Socialism," Mr. Crosland tells us,

> *"denotes a belief in the pre-eminence of certain values, such as equality or co-operation or collective welfare or internationalism. But such values are not absolute. They cannot be held rigidly and uncompromisingly, any more than can the opposite conservative values of hierarchy or competition or individualism or patriotism." (The Future of the Left,* ENCOUNTER, *March 1960.)*

We are back at the game of Happy Families: we can pair off opposite "values" (which are not "absolute"), and look for the good society somewhere in the marital blur in the middle. If, however, we were to pair off exploitation and mutual aid, the encouragement of living culture and the mass production of commercial culture, the businessman's expense account and the railwayman's wage, advertising and education, nuclear disarmament and Blue Streak, we could have reached a different result. The true contradictions and antagonisms of our society would have become apparent: and Mr. Crosland and capitalist values would have been found on one side, socialist values on the other. For the contradiction which expresses itself in opposed values is grounded in the private ownership of the social means of production. The profit-motive remains at the core of our social order, engendering new conflicts which by their nature may be controlled or mitigated but cannot be resolved.... When Mr. Crosland offers us, in the same essay, the Sermon on the Mount (a favourite evasion of Philip Snowden's) and quotes with approval—"it may be better simply to say with William Morris that Socialism is fellowship"—it becomes difficult to know at what point a serious discussion may be entered....

What we mean to direct attention to is the extraordinary hiatus in contemporary Labour thinking on this most crucial point of all—how, and by what means is a transition to socialist society to take place? For Mr. Gaitskell the problem may be irrelevant. The political see-saw is its own justification. "The British prefer the two-Party system," he informed a conference called (in Rhodes) by the Congress for Cultural Freedom in 1958: "They understand team games and they know it gives them stable, strong government." For Mr. Gordon Walker (it may be) the goal is clear:

> *"In the antechamber outside the Cabinet room where Ministers gather before meeting, there is a row of coat-pegs. Under each peg is the name of a great office of state.... Only Cabinet Ministers hang their hats and coats there—and only in the prescribed order—"*

or so he informs the open-mouthed readers of ENCOUNTER *(April 1956), and we have no special reason to disbelieve him. But there remains a subtle difference between speculation as to* which peg *you may hang your coat on and* which point *will disclose the moment of revolutionary transition. Mr. Dennis Healey and Mr. Crosland are anxious to disabuse us of this belief:* power *(they tell us) is all: when the coats are on the pegs, we may leave it to them:*

> *"There is much talk (though rather more in Chelsea and Oxford than in Stepney or Nyasaland) of the dangers of sacrificing principle; what is forgotten is the sacrifice of Socialist objectives, not to mention human freedom and welfare, involved in a long period of impotent opposition." (Crosland in* ENCOUNTER *again)*

It is not clear which specifically socialist *objectives (other than "values" which are not "absolute") Mr. Crosland has in mind. Nor do other potential peg-hangers offer us much more enlightenment. "The Liberal and Labour Movements of the West," Mr. R. H. S. Crossman assures us, "have triumphantly falsified the predictions of Karl Marx:*

> *They have used the institutions of democracy to begin the job of resolving the inherent contradictions of capitalism, evening out the gross inequalities, and transforming the privileges of the bourgeoisie into rights of every citizen." (Also* ENCOUNTER, *June 1956)*

But how does one "resolve" an "inherent contradiction"? And if the job has been begun, *at what point does it* end? *And if the contradiction ends in a* socialist *"resolution," which predictions of Marx will this triumphantly falsify?*

E. P. THOMPSON in NEW LEFT REVIEW (May–June)

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its profound gratitude to all those who have repeatedly raised their voices on behalf of Tibor Déry and his fellow prisoners. Such voices in the world saved them from being forgotten.

PAUL IGNOTUS

Hungarian Writers' Assoc. Abroad,
London

African Theatre

MAY I call to the attention of your readers our literary competition to celebrate the forthcoming Nigerian independence? It is open to all Africans residing in Nigeria, and there will be awards of £100 (first prize) and £50 (second prize) for a play (any subject, any length). The plays will be read and judged by Stephen Spender, Chinua Achebe, and Ezekiel Mphahlele, and the winning play will be staged and performed in Ibadan and Lagos. Your readers may be interested in this, not least perhaps because it has been sponsored by ENCOUNTER, for whose interest in African affairs we are grateful.

ULLI BEIER

University College,
Ibadan, Nigeria

"Lady Chatterley"

I AM writing to congratulate you on having published Katherine Anne Porter's essay or review of *Lady Chatterley* in the February issue of ENCOUNTER. Someone recently called the piece to my attention. What she says about the book is all devastatingly true, and needed to be said, and had to be said by a person who has the authority and prestige of Miss Porter, or it would have been dismissed as a contribution of the "censor-morons."

ELISEO VIVAS

Northwestern University,
Evanston, Illinois

IT SEEMS to me that Richard Aldington [ENCOUNTER, April] is so angry with Katharine Anne Porter that he fails to distinguish between two aspects of D. H. Lawrence—his marvellous poetic vision and his fantastic "philosophy" of sex. Mr. Aldington rightly defends the first ("With him . . . everything was more brilliant, more beautiful, more interesting than one had ever dreamed. . . ." Aldous Huxley also records this); but it was the second that Miss Porter was attacking. Lawrence as a writer is one thing; Lawrence as a philosopher is quite another.

One only has to imagine what would happen to the peculiar Lawrence-and-Lady relationships if one of the ladies ever became pregnant (they never seem to), to realise the nightmarish, self-conscious artificiality of it all.

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